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Jewish Community Federation Leadership Oral History Project

Donald H. Seiler

PRESIDENT, JEWISH COMMUNITY FEDERATION OF SAN FRANCISCO, THE PENINSULA,
MARIN AND SONOMA COUNTIES, 1990-1992

With Introductions by
Phyllis Cook
and
Richard N. Goldman

Interviews Conducted by
Eleanor Glaser
in 1995

Since 1954 the Regional Oral History Office has been interviewing leading participants in or well-placed witnesses to major events in the development of Northern California, the West, and the Nation. Oral history is a method of collecting historical information through tape-recorded interviews between a narrator with firsthand knowledge of historically significant events and a well-informed interviewer, with the goal of preserving substantive additions to the historical record. The tape recording is transcribed, lightly edited for continuity and clarity, and reviewed by the interviewee. The corrected manuscript is indexed, bound with photographs and illustrative materials, and placed in The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, and in other research collections for scholarly use. Because it is primary material, oral history is not intended to present the final, verified, or complete narrative of events. It is a spoken account, offered by the interviewee in response to questioning, and as such it is reflective, partisan, deeply involved, and irreplaceable.

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Donald H. Seiler.

Cataloguing information

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Jewish community leader

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San Francisco background; MBA, UC Berkeley; marriage to Ruth Fredkin; establishes Seiler and Co., CPAs, in San Francisco and the Peninsula; vice president, Belmont Jewish Community Center, president Temple Beth Am; board, United Jewish Community Centers; Jewish Community Federation: campaign chairman, 1976; federation presidency: goals, new executive director, synagogue relationships, Israel; Jewish Community Endowment Fund: chairman, 1988-1990; Council of Jewish Federations special achievement award, 1992; boards of Jewish Home for the Aged, Bureau of Jewish Education, Mount Zion Hospital and Medical Center, Stanford University Medical Center.

Introductions by Phyllis Cook, executive director, Jewish Community Endowment Fund; Richard N. Goldman, past president, Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties.

Interviewed 1995 by Eleanor K. Glaser for the Jewish Community Federation Leadership Oral History Project, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

The Regional Oral History Office would like to express its thanks to the Jewish Community Endowment Fund of The Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties. Their encouragement and support have made possible the Jewish Community Federation Leadership Oral History Project.

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PREFACE

The Jewish Community Federation Leadership Oral History Project was initiated in 1990, under the sponsorship of the Jewish Community Endowment Fund, to record the recent history of the Jewish Welfare Federation. Through oral histories with the sixteen living past presidents and two past executives of the Federation, the project seeks to document Jewish philanthropy in the West Bay as spearheaded by the Federation during the past half-century.

The Jewish community can take pride in the manner in which it has, through the years, assumed the traditional Jewish role of providing for the less fortunate. Organized Jewish philanthropy in San Francisco began in 1850 with the Eureka Benevolent Association, today's Jewish Family and Children's Service Agency. With the organization in 1910 of the Federation of Jewish Charities, the community took the major step of coordinating thirteen separate social service agencies. The funding of local services was absorbed by the Community Chest when the Federation affiliated with it in 1922. Soon thereafter, the need was seen for an organization to support the financial needs of national and overseas agencies. This led to the formation of the Jewish National Welfare Fund in 1925, which pioneered in conducting a single annual campaign for Jewish needs outside of San Francisco. The Federation of Jewish Charities and the Jewish National Welfare Fund merged in 1955, becoming the Jewish Welfare Federation, the forerunner of the present Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties.

This oral history project was conceived by Phyllis Cook, executive director of the Jewish Community Endowment Fund, and Eleanor Glaser, the oral historian who had just completed the oral history of Sanford M. Treguboff, the late executive director of the Federation. They realized that 1990 would be the thirty-fifth year of the Jewish Welfare Federation and that it was none too soon to try to capture the insights and experiences of the Federation's first presidents. Not only would these leaders be able to document the dynamic history of the Federation, but they could link that to the activities of several other agencies since all had prepared themselves for their services as Federation president by working in one or another capacity in the earlier Jewish charitable institutions.

Thus, it was anticipated that through the recollections of these Federation presidents it might be also possible to understand the driving motivations and principles of those pioneer leaders and the forces they dealt with during the building of the Bay Area Jewish community.

Phyllis Cook, in consultation with the board of directors of the Jewish Community Endowment Fund, worked with the Regional Oral History Office of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, to carry out the project. Direction of the project was assumed by Eleanor Glaser, the office research editor for Jewish history subjects.

In the oral history process the interviewer works closely with the memoirist in the preliminary research and in setting up topics for discussion. For the Federation project, Eleanor Glaser conducted extensive research in the Federation Board minutes in order to determine critical events, committee assignments, and the pressing needs during each president's term of office. The interviews are informal conversations that are tape recorded, transcribed, edited by the interviewer for continuity and clarity, checked and approved by the interviewee, and then final typed. The oral history manuscripts are open to research in libraries nationwide. Copies of the Federation project oral histories will be available in the Federation Library; The Bancroft Library; the Department of Special Collections, Library, UCLA; and in other libraries interested in collecting source material on this subject.

Sam Ladar, president of the Jewish Welfare Federation in 1965 and 1966, was the first interviewee. As the initial oral history for the project, general Federation information such as early board minutes, lists of officers, etc., have been included in the Ladar volume. Researchers are advised to start there.

The Regional Oral History Office was established in 1954 to record the lives of persons who have contributed significantly to the history of California and the West. The Office is administered by The Bancroft Library. Over the years the Office has documented a number of leaders in the California Jewish community. The Office is honored to have this opportunity to document Jewish philanthropy in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Eleanor Glaser, Project Director
Jewish Community Federation Leadership
Oral History Project

Willa Baum, Division Head
Regional Oral History Office

December 1996
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley

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- Laurence E. Myers, President, Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties, 1986-1988, 1993
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- Melvin M. Swig, President, Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties, 1971-1972, 1992
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Annette R. Dobbs, *President, Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties, 1988-1990*

Douglas M. Heller, *President, Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties, 1994-1996, in process*

Roselyne C. Swig, *President, Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties, 1992-1994*

INTRODUCTION by Phyllis Cook

I've been privileged to see many lay leaders volunteer their time and lend their expertise to the nonprofit community over a number of years. In that period, I have noted a very small number of what I count as "natural leaders"--leaders who possess a healthy sense of self worth and have an innate sense of good judgment--to whom people gravitate when a truly important or difficult issue or personality must be dealt with.

Don Seiler is such a leader. He has not been afraid to say "no" when powerful forces were pulling another way. He has not hesitated to intervene when others have given up or refused to act either out of inertia, indifference, or fear. He has presided over major change with such skill that participants took for granted the graceful transition. A prime example is the Federation's executive search process, when Brian Lurie left the position as executive director at the Jewish Community Federation after a very long and popular tenure.

Don's sense of fairness never prevented him from telling me and other professionals when he didn't agree with our actions or assumptions. Most lay leaders strive to avoid controversy in their volunteer activities, thus failing often to confront issues that they would deal with in their professional lives. Don's ability to deal with weaknesses and strengths has made the lay/professional partnership much stronger whenever he participated in Federation and community activities. Professionals learn from Don and seek to work with him. A gifted leader creates a sense of responsibility and asks something of others.

Finally, one could not observe Don Seiler at work in the community without being aware of his primary priority--his sense of family. His loyalty and concern for his wife, Ruth, his son and daughter and their families, and his brother, reflects a sense of family that is intense and clearly dominant.

Perhaps Don's unusual record of distinguished service over a long period of time in the Jewish community is partly explained as his response to a part of his "extended family." Leadership is about coping with change. Don Seiler has been a preeminent leader in the Jewish and general communities, which have needed to adapt to an ever changing world.

Phyllis Cook
Executive Director, Jewish Community
Endowment Fund

September 1995
San Francisco

INTRODUCTION by Richard N. Goldman

It is a great honor for me to have received a call from Donald Seiler requesting I write an introduction to his oral history, as it provides an opportunity for me to express some thoughts about a special person.

Don and I have been friends for almost half a century and our lives have traveled similar paths, though I am eight years his senior. Each of us was born in San Francisco, attended local public schools, and continued our education at the University of California, Berkeley. Both Don and I developed our own service businesses, which have remained independent and are well-recognized in their respective fields. In addition, we share a commitment to community service. It has included each of us serving as president of the Jewish Community Federation. Tennis is another shared interest where we enjoy one another's company--whether we are partners or opponents. Also, devoting time to our families is of primary importance to each of us.

Don is a citizen of the highest order. He sets a wonderful example for others to follow. His is a self-made success story. He is highly respected in the general community and especially so within the Jewish community. Having guided his accounting business these many years, it is only natural that he continually assumes leadership positions in community service in the same decisive, confident, and masterful manner as he has in business. At the same time, he is always considerate of the opinions and feelings of others.

During his presidency of the Federation, he undertook the search for a new executive director--a demanding task that he conducted with great success. He gave everyone a chance to be heard, which at times became very difficult for him, and yet he was always patient in spite of heated comments by some community leaders. Today, supporters and one-time opponents alike recognize that Wayne Feinstein was the right choice for the position. In countless ways in addition to the challenge noted above, Don has contributed to the betterment of the Federation and continues to do so.

He has provided excellent support to me and my family both in business and personal affairs. From first-hand experience, I respect Don's sound judgment, his sensitivity, and his depth of knowledge on the subjects of interest to both of us. Our meetings are always productive. Don has made a difference in my life and that of many others. His friendship is and will always be meaningful, inspiring, and treasured.

Those reading Don's oral history will benefit from learning of his outstanding service. In turn, I am delighted to express my admiration and respect of Donald Seiler, a man who has accomplished much and who will continue his commitment to make the world a better place.

Richard N. Goldman
Past President, Jewish Community
Federation of San Francisco, the
Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties

September 1995
San Francisco

INTERVIEW HISTORY--Donald H. Seiler

Donald H. Seiler, president of the San Francisco-based Jewish Community Federation from 1990 to 1992, was newly into his term of office when Federation executive Rabbi Brian Lurie indicated he would leave his position a year earlier than his original notice. Accordingly, Mr. Seiler appointed an executive search committee, which he headed, that hired Wayne Feinstein as Lurie's successor. Mr. Seiler regards the search and the ensuing transition period as the greatest challenge of his presidency.

This episode is recounted in Mr. Seiler's memoir, part of the Jewish Community Leadership Oral History Project underwritten by the Jewish Community Endowment Fund to record the history of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, and Marin and Sonoma Counties.

Following a preliminary informational meeting with Donald Seiler in May, 1995, three interviews were held that summer in the conference room of the Montgomery Street offices of Seiler and Company. Mr. Seiler, a certified public accountant, also has an office in Redwood City.

Terming himself someone who can't say no, Donald Seiler relates that in the 1960s he concurrently served as vice president of the Belmont Jewish Community Center and of Beth Am Temple in Los Altos; he later was named president of Beth Am. At the time he was vice president, the temple was considering an expansion program, and Seiler stated, "...when people are undertaking a project, the guy who can deal with the numbers is very important early on. The first question people always ask is do we really need this. But the second question is can we afford it. Who can do the job of whether you can afford it or figure out ways to finance it but the accounting guy."

After becoming a Federation board member in 1972, Mr. Seiler's first major Federation involvement was taking on the chairmanship of the Jewish education feasibility committee at the request of then-President Mel Swig. As a result of the committee's recommendation, the Brandeis and Hillel schools merged into Brandeis Hillel Day School.

One of Mr. Seiler's goals as president was to improve the relationship between community synagogues and the Federation. To effect that aim, he obtained an allocation of \$100,000 from the Jewish Community Endowment Fund to develop specific programs. As Seiler says, "...because of my background as president of Beth Am, I know the other side of the picture." This endeavor was part of the Department of Community Development created during Mr. Seiler's presidency.

For a number of years prior to his presidency, Donald Seiler was involved with the Jewish Community Endowment Fund, specifically on the allocations subcommittee. He was vice chairman, then chairman of that committee and served as chairman of the overall endowment fund 1988-1990. In 1992, he received a special Endowment Achievement Award from the Council of Jewish Federations.

Mr. Seiler is highly regarded by his Federation peers. Past presidents have said of him, "He is an extraordinarily competent man." "He was the best president." A member of the professional staff stated that Seiler has unusual leadership skills. "He is tough but has a capacity to be fair that is quite unusual. He was exceedingly presidential, and we were lucky we had him at the time we had him. He's of national stature."

In addition to his roles in the Jewish community, Mr. Seiler has been active in and honored by the California Society of Certified Public Accountants, and has been involved with both Mount Zion and Stanford University medical centers.

Donald Seiler carefully reviewed his transcribed oral history, making some changes and adding additional material. To write introductions to the memoir, he suggested Phyllis Cook, executive director of the Jewish Community Endowment Fund, and past president of the Federation Richard Goldman. We appreciate their cooperation.

The Regional Oral History Office was established in 1954 to augment through tape-recorded memoirs the Library's materials on the history of California and the West. Copies of all interviews are available for research use in The Bancroft Library and in the UCLA Department of Special Collections. The office is under the direction of Willa K. Baum, Division Head, and the administrative direction of Charles B. Faulhaber, James D. Hart Director of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Eleanor Glaser
Interviewer/Editor

February 1998
Berkeley, California

Regional Oral History Office
Room 486 The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California 94720

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name DONALD HARVEY SEILER

Date of birth 12/16/28 Birthplace SAN FRANCISCO CA

Father's full name MAURICE LOUIS SEILER

Occupation PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT Birthplace SAN FRANCISCO CA

Mother's full name BESSIE ROSENBERG SEILER

Occupation HOUSEWIFE Birthplace NEW YORK NY

Your spouse ROTH EUGENE SEILER

Your children CHARLES SEILER ROSENBERG
ANDREW SEILER

Where did you grow up? SAN FRANCISCO CA

Present community ATHLETON, CA SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Education B.S. IN B.A. UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
BERKELEY - 1949, 1951.

Occupation(s) SENIOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT
SEILER & COMPANY SAN FRANCISCO AND OAKLAND, CA.

Areas of expertise ACCOUNTING, AUDITING, TAX, ESTATE
PLANNING, BUSINESS CONSULTING

Other interests or activities SPORTS, CHARITABLE WORK
FAMILY, TRAVEL, VARIOUS BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

Organizations in which you are active SEILER COMPANY (OWNER)
PENINSULA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, JEWISH COMMUNITY
FEDERATION, COUNCIL OF JEWISH EDUCATIONS, VARIOUS

I EARLY YEARS IN SAN FRANCISCO, BORN DECEMBER 16, 1928

[Interview 1: July 10, 1995] ##¹

Family Members

Glaser: Where were you born, and when?

Seiler: I was born in San Francisco at Mount Zion hospital, December 16, 1928.

Glaser: Who were your parents?

Seiler: My father was Maurice L. Seiler. My mother was Berdie, B-E-R-D-I-E, Rosenberg Seiler.

Glaser: Where was she born?

Seiler: She was born either in New York City or Albany. She lived in Albany as a child. If she wasn't born in Albany she was born in New York City and then moved to Albany shortly after her birth.

Glaser: What did they do there?

Seiler: I don't know. I think her father had some kind of a tailor's trimming business. They would sell to tailors hangers and equipment and various things like that.

Glaser: Do you know what brought them to California?

Seiler: No. I think they just came to California because there was a move west and I guess things were difficult in the east. Probably my grandfather decided that there is gold in the streets, as the saying goes, you know. So they moved out here.

¹## This symbol indicates that a tape or tape segment has begun or ended. A guide to the tapes follows the transcript.

Glaser: Where was your father born?

Seiler: My father was born in San Francisco. I think also in Mount Zion Hospital. I am not sure.

Glaser: Do you know what brought his parents out?

Seiler: His mother was born in Stockton. My great-grandmother and my grandfather, I think, came from Germany. My grandfather died when I was about two years old. Interestingly enough, my daughter has just done a family chronology.

Glaser: Would you let me have a copy?

Seiler: Sure. She just finished it a week or so ago. She has been working on it for two or three years. That would provide most of this information. She probably knows more about it than I do.

Glaser: But that is nice to include in your volume. Let me know right now, what is your maternal grandparent's family name?

Seiler: Rosenberg. My maternal grandparents were Louis Rosenberg and Betsy Rosenberg.

Glaser: Did you spend much time with them?

Seiler: My grandfather died when I was about eight or nine years old. I spent a little time with him. During the summers my mother and father would rent a house down in Redwood City for a month--I guess it was a month. He would come down and spend a little time with us. I remember him from that venue. I was pretty young.

My mother's mother I knew quite well. She died when I was about eighteen or nineteen years old. I knew her very well. In fact, when I started Berkeley for a year I lived in my mother's sister's house, in Oakland. My grandmother lived in the same house. I was the oldest grandchild of our family and the oldest one is usually closer or a favorite. I was kind of her favorite. I knew her quite well.

Glaser: That is your maternal grandmother. What about your paternal grandparents?

Seiler: My paternal grandfather died when I was a year and a half or two years old. I never knew him. But my father's mother died when I was about thirteen or fourteen. I knew her quite well. She lived near us in San Francisco.

Glaser: What were the names of your grandparents?

Seiler: My grandfather's name was Max Seiler. My grandmother was Nellie Seiler. Her maiden name was Woolf, Nellie Woolf Seiler.

Glaser: You have a brother.

Seiler: I have one brother, Stuart, S-T-U-A-R-T.

Glaser: What were the activities of the family? What sort of things did you do together?

Seiler: We were a close family. My younger years were during the depression. We didn't always have a car so we didn't do a lot of traveling away from home. I remember that my brother and I were close although he is five years younger. We played a lot of ball together and so forth. We are close to this day.

As a family my father worked, obviously. My mother worked from about the time I was eight or nine years old. We would go on Sunday outings together. I remember I went to Sunday school. My father would pick me up at Sunday school, and traditionally we would visit his mother on the way home. That type of thing.

My mother's family, once they left New York, lived in Oakland. She had three brothers and one sister. We would have family events. We were very family oriented. Her sister and brother-in-law had no children. My brother and I were like their children. They kind of doted on us. Not only were there the two of us but there are a few other cousins. They were younger so that there was a big age disparity. We were sort of the only kids in the family for awhile on my mother's side. On my father's side, he had one sister and they had two sons. We were fairly close with them in that we would see them as cousins.

I guess we would just do the things that kids do. We didn't take any trips particularly that I can remember. We would go to Redwood City. Times were different, certainly, than they are now.

Childhood Experiences

Glaser: What were your hobbies as a kid?

Seiler: I was always very interested in sports. I collected stamps at one time. I collected a variety of things. I remember as a little kid I collected milk tops. That was a big thing--the tops off the bottles, like they do baseball cards today. I was in the Boy Scouts. It was Troop 17 in San Francisco, which was a very well-

known troop, mostly Jewish. It met at Temple Emanu-El. That took up a good deal of time. I had jobs. When I was about eight or nine years old I started selling Liberty Magazines. I had a little magazine route. Then when I was probably twelve or thirteen years old, which would have been 1940 or 1941, I delivered newspapers every day after school for what was then the San Francisco News. It was a daily, afternoon newspaper.

Between that and my Boy Scout activities and my sports activities--I was always playing ball with friends of mine in the park or in the school yard, basketball and a variety of sports. That really took up a good deal of my time. As I got a little older it was during the war. When I was thirteen or fourteen I got a job at Sommer and Kaufman. My father got me the job. I tore up shoe boxes. That was my job. [laughs] Then I sold shoes after that. I was a stock boy. As I think back, I didn't have a lot of leisure time. Between school, the sports, and my jobs and so on, time just went.

Glaser: What schools did you go to?

Seiler: I went to Sutro Grammar School, which is on Funston Avenue in San Francisco. I went to Presidio Junior High School on Thirtieth and Geary. I went to George Washington High School, also Thirtieth and Thirty-second and Geary. Then I went to University of California at Berkeley, both undergraduate and graduate.

Glaser: Why did you choose Berkeley?

Seiler: In those days there were really only two schools that most of the kids looked at who wanted to go to what we now call a major college; Cal [University of California at Berkeley] and Stanford [University]. Cal was a public school and Stanford was private, as it is today. We were not financially--I mean, I never even considered Stanford. There weren't the scholarships that there are available today. There was no money to go to Stanford. I don't know that I would have anyway. I just automatically knew when I was ten years old, I guess, that I was going to go to Cal.

Religious Affiliation

Glaser: Let me back up a bit and ask you about your religious education.

Seiler: My family were members of Temple Sherith Israel. I was bar mitzvah at Sherith Israel. Just as an anecdote--I might have told you this before--my bar mitzvah was scheduled for the Saturday

after Pearl Harbor was bombed. Of course, they didn't have the bar mitzvah because they didn't allow anybody to congregate at that point. So, it was postponed a little while.

I was bar mitzvah at Sherith Israel and went to Sunday school. I was confirmed at Sherith Israel. In fact, I actually did a little assistant teaching at Sherith Israel. At Sherith Israel in those days, for bar mitzvah we never learned Hebrew. We went to the cantor at Sherith Israel, Benjamin Liederman. You went once a week after school for four months before your bar mitzvah. You learned to transliterate the brochas [blessings] and a few of the other things, but you never learned any Hebrew. There was really no religious training like there is today in terms of being bar mitzvah at our Reform congregation.

I was not particularly involved in any Jewish activities. I didn't belong to AZA. I really wasn't involved in Jewish activities at all except for going to Sunday school.

Glaser: Were your parents involved at all?

Seiler: No, not really. They were members of a temple. To that extent they were involved. They were not involved, but we were Jewish. All of their friends were Jewish. Most of my friends were all Jewish. But the Richmond district in those days--there were a lot of Jewish families that lived there.

Glaser: Where did you live in the Richmond District?

Seiler: We lived on Thirtieth Avenue. Well, we first lived on Fifteenth Avenue. Then we lived on Funston Avenue when I went to grammar school. Then in 1940, I think, my mother and father built a small house out there and we moved to Thirtieth Avenue. I lived there for the rest of the time until I left home.

University of California, Berkeley

Glaser: Let's pick up on your going to UC Berkeley.

Seiler: Because I wanted to get through high school and get as much college in before I went to the service, I actually started Cal in June of 1945. I was sixteen and a half. I picked up a year in skipping grades in grammar school and I picked up a half a year by going to summer high school. I started in 1945, and I guess as all good Jewish boys do I was pre-med, or at least as they did in those days. I was pre-med for lack of anything else. I was

young, you know, and at sixteen I didn't know what the heck I wanted to do. But there I was.

Glaser: Did you have a mentor that gave you that kind of an idea?

Seiler: No, not that I remember. Pre-med just seemed to be a good thing to do. Maybe my mother or father--I don't really remember. All I knew was I was pre-med. So I took the pre-med and I took a lot of science. I took a lot of physics, I took a lot of chemistry. I was a pretty good student. I was, actually, a very good student. But I got into chemistry, quantitative analysis, and I didn't like that. After about a year and a half or maybe two years, I decided that pre-med wasn't for me.

As one of my electives I had taken a course in accounting 1A and 1B. My father by profession was an accountant, although he worked for the bank and other people. He wasn't in his own practice. I took this accounting course and I was pretty good in math, I guess. and I liked it. When I decided that I would no longer go into pre-med, then I had to do something. I figured I might as well take an accounting course. It can't hurt me, whatever I learn I can use no matter what I do.

I decided to get my bachelor of science in business with a major in accounting. I took all of the requisite accounting courses. When I started Cal they were on a trimester system, again because of the war. Between June 1945 and June 1946 I completed an equivalent of a year and a half of work, three full semesters. I now picked up another half a year.

I was scheduled to be drafted when I was eighteen. Before I was eighteen the war was over. They then moved the draft age to nineteen. By the time I was just about nineteen the draft law expired, so I didn't get drafted and I continued to go on to school. I had a year and a half to go. In 1948, the military was going to have a draft again. If you joined the reserves you got a deferment until you finished college. So I joined the naval reserve. I went to Treasure Island every Monday night for the navy reserve meetings.

Glaser: Was that the extent of your duties?

Seiler: That was the extent of it. I enlisted for four years in the naval reserve. I then finished at Cal. I finished my bachelors degree in January of 1949. I had just become twenty in December of 1948. By then I knew something about accounting and I was very young. Cal had a very good program to prepare you for the CPA exam, and I could do it in one year to January 1950. I went the one year. All I had to do was write a thesis to get a master's in business

administration, which I did. Then I went on and got a job after January of 1950.

Glaser: Did you expect to join your father?

Seiler: No. He was an accountant but he was not in public accounting. He didn't have a business.

Glaser: I see. Which bank did he work for?

Seiler: He worked for what was then the Anglo-California National Bank, which later became Crocker-Anglo, which later became Wells Fargo, I think.

Glaser: Where did you live when you didn't live with your aunt?

Seiler: The first year I lived with my aunt in Oakland. The second year I lived in a boarding house on the north side of campus. Then I joined a fraternity, Pi Lambda Phi. Actually, it was right after the war that I joined the fraternity. We didn't have a fraternity house so we lived in the boarding house. During 1947 we got a house, and I lived in the fraternity house for the last two years of my undergraduate. Then for my graduate year I lived at home in San Francisco.

Glaser: Did you experience any anti-Semitism at Cal?

Seiler: No. The only thing that I guess you would consider experiencing-- when I was sixteen and a senior in high school I was rushed by a fraternity over there. A friend of mine from Washington High and I went over. They had this beautiful fraternity house. There was a creek running through the grounds. I think it was Lambda Chi Alpha but I am not sure. We were rushed to this fraternity. It was one of the best fraternities and so forth. They asked me to pledge. I went over there a couple of times and I was thrilled. I was thrilled. I told my folks and my father said, "You shouldn't join that fraternity. They don't allow Jews." Of course, as kids will be, I had a big argument with him. I ultimately did follow his advice and I didn't join.

There was another fellow who was pledged at the time, from Oakland. He joined, he accepted the offer to pledge the fraternity. About three months later he no longer was in the fraternity. He had been asked to leave. Do I know that he was asked to leave because he was Jewish or not? No, I don't know. He thought it was that. There were no other Jewish members in the fraternity to my knowledge. That is the only anti-Semitism, if it was anti-Semitism, that I ever encountered there. I was not a

member of Hillel. I was really not active in any Jewish activities at all.

Glaser: Did you have any outstanding teachers that you remember today?

Seiler: I remember in chemistry I had Joel Hildebrand, who was one of the famous people at the time. I had a professor in, I think it was public speaking, by the name of Fred Stripp, who also was famous at the time. In the accounting field I had a number of them. I had Lawrence Vance, I had Maurice Moonitz, my elementary accounting teacher was Perry Mason, and he was very well-known. I also had Clark Kerr--he ultimately became the chancellor at U.C. I had a number of professors who were very well known in Berkeley. One was Ten Broek. I don't know if you ever heard of Ten Broek. Ten Broek was a professor in English, I believe, and was blind. He was famous. He would walk around the campus without a cane, without a dog, without anything. He'd come down the street in front of Wheeler Hall. I have forgotten the name of the street. But he'd come walking in straight steps and then he'd make a sharp right. They say he could walk all over campus. It was incredible. He was well known also. So I had a number of them.

II MARRIAGE AND FIRST EMPLOYMENT

Ruth Fredkin

Glaser: You met your wife at Cal?

Seiler: I met my wife at Cal. I had met her once before in the summer of 1947. A group of us--I don't know whether it was a fraternity party or it was something where we all went out somewhere. She was from San Jose and a friend of mine was fixed up with her for a date. I met her, but casually. I don't know if I ever even spoke to her, or if I did, "Hello, how are you." So, if I met her, I really didn't know her.

Glaser: What was her family name?

Seiler: Fredkin. F-R-E-D-K-I-N. I really met her at the AEPHI Presents, (where they present their pledges) in September of 1947. She was an incoming freshman, she was a pledge of AEPHI. I don't know if they still do it or not, but at the Presents they invite the fraternities over to meet the girls. It's like a big reception and I met her there. We started dating the next week. I never dated anybody else after that, nor did she.

Glaser: What was she studying?

Seiler: She was a freshman. She was in, I think, Letters and Science. She didn't have a particular course that she was studying. She took a general course as a freshman at that time. We went together for three years, until we got married. After about a year I gave her a fraternity pin. After another year we got engaged. After another year we got married. I didn't want to get married until I had a job and I could support her. Maybe they still do that I don't know. They don't seem to. And so, we went together for three years. She went to Cal for two years and then she went back to San Jose. So, the last year of our engagement she worked in San Jose. She didn't complete her degree at Cal.

Glaser: What kind of work was she doing?

Seiler: She worked in a women's dress shop in San Jose in sales.

Glaser: So, what year was it that you married?

Seiler: 1950.

Glaser: And you were married in San Jose.

Seiler: Married in San Jose at Temple Emanu-El.

Glaser: But lived in San Francisco?

Seiler: We lived in San Francisco. We lived in an apartment in the Richmond District.

Glaser: Did your wife continue to work after marriage?

Seiler: No.

Glaser: You really are a man of your time, aren't you?

Seiler: Well, actually the truth is most all of our friends were that way.

Glaser: But some women worked until they had their first baby.

Seiler: Well, but most of our friends didn't. I don't know, she didn't anyway.

Children Carol and Richard

Glaser: When were your children born?

Seiler: Our first child was born in June of 1952, which was about a year and nine months after we were married.

Glaser: And the name of that child?

Seiler: Carol, C-A-R-O-L. And in January of 1955, our son was born, Richard.

Glaser: Do you have grandchildren?

Seiler: We have four grandchildren: We have Cory, who is eighteen. We have Mark, who is fifteen, he'll be sixteen in a few weeks. Those

are my daughter's two children. Then my son has two children; Matthew, who is nine, and Alexandra, who is four.

Glaser: Having one daughter, she must be the light of your life.

Seiler: We did very well, we had one son and one daughter, and each of our children had one son and one daughter. They are all the lights of our lives.

Glaser: Oh, Cory is...?

Seiler: Cory is a girl.

Job Hunting

Glaser: Now let's talk about the start of your career.

Seiler: All right. I got out of Cal with this master's degree. This was even before the Korean War started. We were already engaged, and I proceeded to look for a job. At that time they didn't come to the campus to do campus interviews. Or, at least, if they did I didn't know about it. Plus not many people got master's degrees. It wasn't that a master's degree was so special, it is just that basically the mind set was you go to school for your four years and then you go to work. The only reason I didn't is I was very young and I wanted to take these courses. So, I got my master's.

I finished school in January of 1950. I took my comprehensives and so forth. I thought: I'm going to go to the accounting firms with a master's degree, they're going to lay the red carpet out for me, I'll get a job. Well, I went to the major accounting firms here in San Francisco, and I was not offered a job. I don't know whether that had to do with a little anti-Semitism or not. It's easy to blame it, and at that time the conversation was that they weren't looking for young Jewish boys--there weren't many girls in the profession. Whether it was or it wasn't anti-Semitism, I don't know. I always thought maybe it was a little bit.

I tramped the streets for about three months. It was a difficult time to look for a job in the accounting business, besides, because I was through in the middle or late part of January. Income tax returns in those days were due March fifteenth. I can now see it as an employer. If you come to me in the middle of February, let's say, or a month later, and you're looking for a job, the odds are that we're staffed up the way we

want to be. And for us to take somebody on that late is difficult.

As an aside, I remember I just hated it when I'd go look for a job, or I'd go to employment agencies, or I'd follow this lead or that lead. It was a very depressing experience for me. As a result, I really have a lot of empathy for anybody looking for a job since it's a very degrading thing, in my view. Fortunately, I only had to do it the one time. I looked and I looked, and nothing was forthcoming. You know, they'll call me and so on.

Goldeen and Nemer

Seidel: My father had a friend, a good friend his whole life, whose accountant had an office on Market Street. My father asked the friend if they would be interested in hiring somebody. They said, well, they'd interview me. So, I went in for an interview. This was maybe two months after I got out of school. They didn't need anybody, but they would interview me. So, they did and I didn't hear anything.

Then one Friday the phone rang, and the reason I remember it was a Friday I'll get to in a second. They asked me if I could do two days work, on Saturday and Sunday. Well, I was happy to do anything, you know. So, I took the job and one thing led to another. They had more work, and they liked what I did, so it became a permanent job. But it was a very small firm.

Glaser: Do you remember the name of the firm?

Seiler: Yes, it was Goldeen, G-O-L-D-E-E-N, and Nemer, N-E-M-E-R. And it was comprised of these two CPAs, two staff people and a secretary.

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Seiler: I worked there for about four years, first as a junior accountant --I went up by title. Meanwhile, the senior partner, who was Goldeen, got sick. It ultimately turned that he had leukemia. The other partner, who was Nemer, was going to law school at night. He really wanted to be a lawyer and a CPA, to practice law, not practice accounting. One's sick and one's putting his attention elsewhere, and the practice wasn't going anywhere. The practice, if anything, is going kind of downwards.

About the end of the fourth or fifth year I decided. I said, "Look, I want to be a partner here. I'm doing most of the

work." "Most" of the work was not a lot because there weren't many clients anyway, but they're off doing other things. So they said okay, they would make me a junior partner.

Within the course of this, there was going to be a new partnership agreement. There wasn't enough money to go around, and the two of them started fighting over little things. Like who's going to pay for this car, or what kind of car should you have. I mean, things that people wouldn't fight about if there was sufficient income.

I was watching this and I came to a conclusion; what am I getting myself into here? I didn't have any business. I wasn't making very much money. I was making about six thousand dollars a year in 1955 or 56, which even by standards then wasn't really much. And I had a job on Saturdays to supplement it. We got a little help earlier on from the family, and so forth. I then realized that I wasn't getting anywhere.

III A FIRM OF ONE'S OWN

Seiler and Company

Seiler: I had this master's degree and I went to Golden Gate College and I said, "Can I get a job teaching at night." Because I figured if I was going to leave there I didn't have any business. I had about two or three thousand dollars worth of business. But if I take two or three thousand of that, plus a little income teaching, I'm not going to do any worse than I was doing there, and I may do better. So, I agonized for a couple of months and finally decided to go out on my own.

I went to them and said, "Look, I'm not going to leave you in the lurch. I'm going to go on my own, I'll do a little per diem work for you during tax season if you can't get anybody else," which was good for them and also good for me. So, I embarked to start my firm--my firm, me. You know, it sort of limped along. Then about the middle of the first year, I got a big piece of business. So, I did pretty well, and then it grew from there.

Glaser: Did you enjoy your work?

Seiler: Yes. Oh, yes. I enjoyed it because you are dealing with people. Different than if you go to work as an accountant in private industry. True, you're dealing with people in the industry, but it's the same people all the time, pretty much. But in public accounting you have a complete diversity of clients and of people, and if you're creative you're in a professional capacity doing interesting things. I don't enjoy the negatives, which nobody does.

Glaser: What are the negatives?

Seiler: Well, when you're the senior member of a company you have administrative responsibility; you have employees that sometimes are easy to deal with and sometimes not. You have clients that sometimes take positions on things that, really, maybe they shouldn't take. Some are easy to deal with, some are not easy to deal with. When there are problems in the firm, particularly as it gets bigger, when the client is unhappy. He can deal with my people, but if he's unhappy about something I'm the one he'll come to. So, as you go by year after year after year, if you could somehow eliminate the negatives and then just do the positives, the positives are wonderful. It's true in any business.

Glaser: Sure. I imagine that the personnel aspect is complicated.

Seiler: Yes, but I don't do that much anymore. But every once in while, after all these years, if an employee is really upset about something sometimes I'll come in and see him. I do it as part of what I'm supposed to do, but I don't like it.

Moving to the Peninsula

Glaser: Was most of your business at that time income tax returns?

Seiler: Income tax returns and small clients. What happened was, when I decided to go into business, January first of 1957, my wife and I --as I mentioned, she's from San Jose and I'm from San Francisco-- always wanted to live on the Peninsula for the future. So, I decided that maybe we will move to the Peninsula at some point.

So I opened an office. My first office was in San Carlos. I took one little office in the office of a friend of mine who was in the insurance business, and that's where it all started.

I, meanwhile, kept a small office in San Francisco with an answering service because I felt that, particularly on the Peninsula, people thought if you're from San Francisco you know more. I had a letterhead and I did have an office. I had a letterhead with San Francisco and San Carlos. I'd come in a couple of days a week to San Francisco--I was in the Mills building. That's it. I didn't have a secretary or anything, but I had an answering service.

I'd bring some work with me or I'd meet some people in San Francisco. Having grown up in San Francisco, I knew an awful lot of people here, and I'd meet friends for lunch and things like that--network, as they now call it. For about eight or ten years,

that's all we had in San Francisco. I reverse commuted from '57 to '60. In 1960, we built a house in Menlo Park. My main headquarters was on the Peninsula. I was in San Carlos and I later moved to Redwood City.

I had these two offices, although the one in San Francisco wasn't much. The practice slowly grew and my wife was my secretary to start with and did a lot of the typing and things, which was a major help. Then after a couple of years I hired a secretary. After another year I hired a junior accountant to assist me. It started off slowly but it grew. Some of my clients were in the construction business in Los Altos, Menlo Park, Palo Alto, and that area just exploded. I developed some pretty good expertise in that area, plus the tax shelter area. The practice really started to grow with a heavy concentration of real estate, architects, contractors, developers, that kind of thing, which was good business.

Glaser: What role did government policies play at that point?

Seiler: Almost nothing that I knew of. The only government policy, I would say, that made a significant difference is they keep simplifying the income tax every couple of years, and the more they simplify the more complicated it gets.

Glaser: Simplicity?

Seiler: I'm using that word facetiously. Every time they simplify it, it makes the work twice as hard, or not twice as hard but some quantum amount harder. And so government policy in terms of complication of the tax rules made our business much more significant in the tax area and the planning area. Our emphasis is good service, high quality, and creativity. We also do a considerable amount of auditing and consulting.

Glaser: Weren't there changes in tax sheltering?

Seiler: Yes. But it was in the eighties that they made the major tax changes in that.

Glaser: I see. Not while you were still developing.

Seiler: Right. Right. The things that benefited me to grow the firm as it was, in addition to having some good people that worked for me and later some became partners, were the economic expansion of the area, plus the complexity of the laws, plus a heck of a lot of hard work. I mean, eighty to hundred hours weeks for a long time, plus some luck and, hopefully, plus some skill.

Glaser: Is your brother in the firm with you?

Seiler: No, my brother's in the insurance business. He's been in the firm with Richard Goldman for thirty-five years.

Glaser: Oh, I didn't know that. You were able to latch on to the development of Silicon Valley?

Seiler: Yes, in terms of the real estate development in some of the electronics or high-tech businesses. We've had many high-tech businesses as clients and still do. It's not just the high-tech, but Silicon Valley created all kinds of other activities. San Jose grew from 80,000 people in 1950 or thereabouts to over a million people in all the intervening areas. And so we grew with that. That's when I mentioned luck and timing. You've got to be in the right place at the right time.

IV COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Early Fundraising for Federation

Glaser: Tell me about the start of your community involvement.

Seiler: In the early years (I guess when I say early years I mean from 1955 on) I took a few cards here and there for the Federation. We belonged to Temple Emanu-El when we lived in San Francisco. I was never involved there, particularly.

Glaser: When you took cards, was that within your own profession?

Seiler: I've always liked to solicit people that I know rather than people that I don't know. So, it could have been cards of people that I knew or within the profession. You know, twenty-five or fifty dollars, or a hundred dollars, it was not a big thing. First of all, the level of charity at that point was not very large, particularly for young people. I was twenty-five, thirty years old, we weren't making or giving very much money. I guess I took cards but I really wasn't involved in any other way.

Glaser: But why did you get started altogether? This was not a pattern set up for you by your parents, and you didn't have very much money.

Seiler: I don't know why. Maybe somebody asked me who I respected, I would guess, I just don't really know why. But I did this, kind of very low key, until about 1958 or '59 or '60, somewhere in there.

Belmont Jewish Community Center

Seiler: A friend of mine was active in the Belmont Jewish Community Center, what's now the Peninsula Jewish Community Center. They were going to build a facility in Belmont. He came in to see me. I had just been in practice a couple of years, and I don't know what I gave to Federation, but if it was twenty-five dollars or fifty dollars, maybe even that's an exaggeration. I really don't remember.

Maybe it didn't come so much from my background, but I always felt that if you are a member of the community you have to be a part of the community. I've always felt that way. My friend came in to see me and asked me for a contribution of \$500 to their building fund. I remember this pretty clearly, \$500 was like out of the blue.

It wasn't that I didn't have \$500. By that time, I was probably making ten or fifteen, maybe twenty thousand dollars a year. In the second or third year my practice began to go up. So I could afford the \$500, I guess. It's just that that was not within my realm of understanding. I said I'd let him know. I don't happen to be a very good nay sayer. It's the good news and the bad news. The good news you do a lot a things, the bad news is people keep asking you to do things.

Glaser: [chuckles]

Seiler: I thought about it and I talked with my wife about it and so on and so forth. Finally I said, "Okay, we'll give you the \$500." Maybe it was over a period of a couple years. It was ten to twenty times anything we'd ever given before to anything. I did and they asked me to be on the board of the community center. I did that. I was thrilled, that was a big thing. I was part of the community.

I don't really think that I ever did any of the things that I did solely for business promotion. However, when selling anything you have got to show the merchandise. In the profession the merchandise is you. If you don't know people and you can't show them what you can do, you're not going to get anywhere. So there was a major benefit of a lot of the things that I've done in my professional career. I think I can honestly say that wasn't the motivation for it, but it was a nice result.

One of the things that happens (being in the numbers business), if you want to call it that, when people are undertaking a project, the guy who can deal with the numbers is

very important early on. The first question people always ask is do we really need this. But the second question is can we afford it. Who can do the job of whether you can afford it or figure out ways to finance it but the accounting guy. So what happens on all these things is you become very important early. When you become very important early, if you're willing to put in the time and willing to take a leadership role, it's very easy. I'm not trying to be modest, but it's very easy to become a big player in these things because you're not just another person sitting on a committee, you're doing some of the presenting. So, I got involved in the money part of that.

Glaser: Did they make you treasurer?

Seiler: No, because I would refuse. You'll notice in my resume I've never been treasurer of anything. I've always refused to be treasurer because I felt it was stereotyping an accountant.

Glaser: [laughter]

Seiler: Maybe it's my craziness but I always felt that way. I didn't mind doing the work, but I never wanted to be treasurer. And I never was treasurer (or at least I was maybe once, I don't even remember), because I didn't want to be treasurer. I got involved in this building thing, and I became a member of the board, and then they asked me to be an officer, and so on.

Temple Beth Am, Los Altos Hills

Seiler: We now lived down there and joined Temple Beth Am. They had a building fund that you had to contribute to. We did that but nothing unusual, whatever the required amount was, and we belonged to Beth Am for two or three years. This is probably 1963 or 1964.

We'd go once in a while, we didn't go very often. You know, for yahrzeits [anniversaries of deaths] and we wanted to make some friends. We moved down the Peninsula and we knew Christian people, but we hardly knew any Jewish people. We'd thought we'd meet some at the temple. We'd go in and typically you'd have the Oneg Shabbat [a social hour following Sabbath services] and you stand there. My wife and I would talk to each other and nobody would come up to us, so pretty soon we said the heck with that. We sort of gave up on that.

We did get to know, however, some Jewish people who belonged to Temple Beth Jacob in Redwood City, which is Conservative, not

Reformed. We decided we'd go to services at Beth Jacob. We went one Friday night, and 90 percent of it was in Hebrew, which we didn't understand, and the services were longer rather than shorter. We didn't really like that. So, we didn't know what to do. We're now maybe at '63 or '64, so I knew a lot more people.

One day, I had lunch with a fellow who was a friend of ours, who was quite active at Beth Am. I told him, "I'm going to resign from Beth Am because I don't feel comfortable." They didn't have a sanctuary or social hall, there were just classrooms and a little auditorium. We're used to Emanu-El in San Francisco, that big stone edifice. Down there you're sitting in a school room on high holy days, and the dogs are running around, it was just the exact opposite. And we didn't know anybody. We just felt that the ambience of it was such that we didn't like it. We later realized that it's the people not the facility. When you get to know the people you feel at home, if you don't know the people you don't feel at home.

Glaser: Right. It think that's always a problem in synagogues.

Seiler: Yes. Terrible, terrible! I said we're going to quit Beth Am. The next night I get a phone call from the then-president of Beth Am, who was George Saxe. I don't know if you know George and Dorothy Saxe?

Glaser: I know of them.

Seiler: George was temple president and he called me. He said that he'd like me to be on a committee. Obviously my friend had talked to him, you know, and they don't want to lose any members, particularly members in the business community. They have a committee that's studying building a sanctuary/social hall for the temple and would I be on the committee? I said yes I would, because I really didn't want to quit Beth Am, I just didn't feel at home there.

Well, I then went through the same scenario; I went to the meeting and there was someone who happened to be an accountant who wasn't a very good communicator. He was going to be the person with the numbers and he didn't do the job. So, they asked me to do the job. For about six months or a year we worked, and we developed this grand plan, and so forth. I was again in the center of it because I was the numbers person. The next thing I know, I'm on the board of directors of the temple.

Glaser: You know, you made a statement when I met with you before, "Money is a key to volunteer involvement." That was a very astute thought.

Seiler: Well, you have to be willing to do more than just give service. You should, within your ability, participate in the financial end of it too.

Glaser: I think you didn't mean it that way. I think you meant it in your role as the numbers man--numbers meaning money.

Seiler: Both meanings, not only the giving of money. What I just told you now, I'm saying the same thing.

Glaser: Right.

Seiler: If you want to be involved meaningfully, because you're not just one in the crowd, you're somebody in the core of what's happening. They asked me to be on the board of the temple, so I got very involved.

Two Vice Presidencies

Glaser: You were active in two organizations at the same time.

Seiler: I was active in two organizations at the same time, and then I became a vice president. We sort of had a ladder at the Jewish Center. What happened was, with the temple there were three or four votes before the building program was approved. There were some political things in the temple where a man who expected to be president wasn't elected president, somebody ran against him. Not me, I was just a member of the board. When this man lost, they then needed two vice presidents. At this meeting they turned to me and asked me to be a vice president of the temple. So then I was vice president of the temple and vice president of the Center at the same time.

Glaser: What was going on at the Center?

Seiler: Well, it had been constructed. They were developing a program and so forth. Centers, you know--we've had problems here in San Francisco, which you're aware of. But it was creating a Center for the Jewish community. I saw it was parallel, and as it happened I was supposed to be president of the Jewish Center. But at that time the temple thing was in full swing, and they asked me to be president of the temple. I chose the temple rather than the Center. I stepped aside at the Center and continued on at the temple.

I was president of the temple, 1968 and 1969. You can see on your sheets here the dates for the temple and the Jewish Community Center begin to intersect. Maybe my chronology is a little bit off, but they begin to intersect. I was vice president of the Jewish Center, '64 to '65. I guess what happened was they asked me to be vice president of the temple in '66. I chose that rather than being vice president of the Center in '66.

Glaser: Was there any reason for choosing one over the other?

Seiler: Yes, because the temple was much more a center of our lives. I mean, the Jewish Center was nice, but it was in Belmont and we lived in Menlo Park. While I wanted it to prosper, it was an activity which we really never used any of the facilities. We were never involved in it, really, in any way. We were heavily involved in the temple. The magnitude of our family involvement--my kids went to Sunday school there and so on--was large at the Temple and little at the Center. So there was really not much of a question.

Board Member, United Jewish Community Centers

Seiler: Then they asked me to go on the board at UJCC [United Jewish Community Centers] when I didn't become president of the Center, and I was on the board of UJCC concurrently with being active at the temple.

Glaser: Did the UJCC meet in San Francisco, on California Street?

Seiler: On California, yes.

Glaser: What were your duties as a member of the board?

Seiler: Just as a board member. I mean I was probably on some committees, but nothing that anybody would recognize as my doing anything special.

Glaser: That was period of development for the UJCC, wasn't it?

Seiler: I guess so. Although in the UJCC at that time there was San Francisco, there was Belmont, and there was a tiny Center in Palo Alto, not what we have now. There was nothing in Marin, I don't think. I don't remember whether Brotherhood Way had been started or not. I was a board member, and I guess I was an active board member, but I didn't distinguish myself in any particular area.

Glaser: You must have had a Center at Brotherhood Way, otherwise it wouldn't have been termed the "United" JCC, would it?

Seiler: Except it could have been at the time, I don't remember. There weren't always five, there might have been two or three.

President, Temple Beth Am, 1968

Glaser: When you were president of the synagogue, were there any problems that you had to deal with?

Seiler: I was president of the synagogue at a particularly crucial time. When I became a vice president in '66 and '67, we went through four votes to build the sanctuary/social hall, which was a major thing with the temple. Also there was a lot of social action at the time. There was Martin Luther King and his civil rights leadership; our rabbi went down and marched with Martin Luther King. It was a little earlier than that. The Vietnam War was started, so there was a lot of things going on. The temple was in a growing stage because this also is fairly early in the Silicon Valley development era, so people were moving in.

Glaser: Was Rabbi [Sidney] Akselrad the rabbi then?

Seiler: Yes. He was the rabbi then. I think he became the rabbi in 1961 or '62. The congregation needed a two-thirds vote and we finally got the building plan passed. I was now the vice president, and they asked me to be the fundraising chairman for the drive, which was a big, big thing for us. I became fundraising chairman, and we ultimately had a very successful drive. But not because of me --we had a professional fundraiser. I'm sure I helped, but I was not the major reason that had this successful drive. We had the drive and we started construction while I was the vice president. Then when I became president in 1968, we had the dedication.

We also at that time hired our first assistant rabbi. The temple had never been big enough for an assistant rabbi, and that was a controversial thing, as you can imagine.

Glaser: Did you have a cantor?

Seiler: We had a cantorial soloist at that time. We later on had a cantor. My son missed by about three weeks being bar mitzvah in the new sanctuary. He was bar mitzvah in the old social hall.

It was an exciting time. Temples, or any organization, are relatively passive unless there's some confrontational thing, usually. This building was a very focused, concentrated, confrontational thing. But when it got through--I should say I can't speak for everybody, but it's gotten a lot of acclaim. Have you ever been to Beth Am?

Glaser: Yes, I attended a bar mitzvah there earlier this year.

Seiler: It worked out very, very well. They are now, parenthetically, going through another one of those, because they want to expand the facilities and they lost the first vote on it. But that's got nothing to do with my history. I'm involved there still but not actively.

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Seiler: My major concern on the presidency of temple was number one, the operational part of the temple; number two, the new building; number three, the beginning of the assistant rabbi being present, which brings with it certain political things; number four, the social action, the political climate. That was very involved because of the Vietnam War, because of the boys that didn't want to be drafted. I remember somebody had burned his draft card, and they wanted him to come and speak to the temple on a Friday night. There was a group against it and one group for it. Those kinds of things were of significance.

Glaser: What was the temple relationship vis-a-vis Israel?

Seiler: Oh, very strong. That's right, I forgot one thing--in 1967 the Six Day War. The temple was very, very supportive and very involved in that. We were very supportive of Israel all the way along. I, also, was very concerned. I always felt, maybe more so than most temple presidents (I would be honest about it) that the temple is really the center of the Jewish community.

It's very important that the temple reach out to the community in terms of community support, rather than just its members. I felt we needed to support things like the Center, we needed to support the Federation, we needed to support Israel Bonds, we needed to support all these things to get out our people to be more cohesive Jewishly. For example, when the Six Day War came along we were very strongly in that. In 1973, the same way.

I felt that you have to be more than just your own encapsulated organization. I don't think anybody argued about that. That was one of the most important things to me, as is

evidenced by the things that I've gone into later on from the temple. I think community is really important.

I also felt that Israel was important to us, not only for the fact that it was a Jewish state, not only for the fact that they welcome any refugee there, but for the fact that as Jews our esteem in the eyes of the non-Jewish community significantly increased by the actions of Israel, particularly during all the years that they were the underdog. We became more respected by indirect activity. And, I thought, not only do we have a religious interest in Israel and a humanitarian interest in Israel, but we have a selfish interest in Israel.

If Israel ceased to exist tomorrow, my concern would be what that would do to us as Jews, besides all the other bad things that it would bring, in the eyes of the community we live in. We're in a Christian community, and we have an unprecedented quality of life as Jews in this country, and I think Israel has been a major player in that.

Glaser: Does that mean that you engaged in inter-faith activities in the temple?

Seiler: Some, yes. Our rabbi was very involved; Rabbi [Richard] Block is there now. We did engage in inter-faith activities. We have exchanged services and things like that. Now, the magnitude of it is not so great, but we did some of it. The problem always is, particularly when a lay person is president, as opposed to the professional or the rabbi, first of all you're only president a relatively short time. There are enough things to do and you don't usually get to do the things that you want to do because your time just runs out.

My relationship with Sidney Akselrad was an excellent one, and it still is, to the point where we still see each other all the time, have lunch together even though he's retired. I thought he was a wonderful spiritual leader, not only in other things but in this particular area. He was very community minded. He was that way in Berkeley when he was there. I think when we were in Berkeley, he was at Hillel. But I didn't know him because we weren't involved in Hillel.

V JEWISH COMMUNITY FEDERATION, FORMERLY JEWISH WELFARE FEDERATION

[Interview 2: July 18, 1995] ##

More on Early Fundraising

Seiler: I'll be clearing my throat a lot during this.

Glaser: I'd like you to tell me about the earlier years of your involvement with the Federation.

Seiler: I guess I first started some activity with the Federation in just taking some cards and doing some solicitation. It began, probably, while I was still living in San Francisco, in the mid-1950s. Then it continued when I moved to the Peninsula in 1960.

Glaser: What got you started?

Seiler: I really don't remember. Probably some peer or associate or friend of mine was doing it, I would guess, and asked would I take a few cards, and I said sure. You know, once you are on the list you don't get off very easily. I would think that was it. I'm certain I didn't go to the Federation and say, "Please give me some cards." That must be the way it happened. I did that for a while.

As I told you in the last meeting, I then became involved in the Center to some extent and then with the temple. I had, and still have, a strong feeling that being a member of the Jewish community involves or includes a variety of things, and they all are interrelated. It's not a question of supporting this one and not supporting that one. I don't mean to say you have to support everything. I believe that (certainly in the suburbs, where I live) the synagogue is sort of the center of the Jewish community.

I think in order to have a viable community you need a synagogue--one or more, you need a Federation presence, you need a Center presence, you need the various agencies support, and so on and so forth. I don't think it's exclusively one or the other. Not everybody agrees with me, but that was always my feeling. So as I became more involved in not-directly Federation things, I included the Federation in my activities, initially at a lower level and then gradually at an increasing level.

Glaser: Your Federation fundraising was initially in South Peninsula. What were the boundaries of South Peninsula?

Seiler: Well, you say fundraising. Taking cards was originally in San Francisco. But it was very minimal. I don't remember, maybe somebody gave me three or four of five cards. People would give me twenty-five dollars or something like that, and I either saw them or called them. But my more significant activities were on the Peninsula.

I moved to the Peninsula in 1960. The boundaries of the South Peninsula for the Federation go from Belmont-San Carlos and/or Redwood City--there's a little overlap there between North Peninsula and South Peninsula--down to Mountain View and parts of Sunnyvale. As Silicon Valley developed, you had an awful lot of people who lived in what we considered the South Peninsula area who might have worked in the San Jose Federation area or vice-versa. There's some overlap, but generally speaking from Belmont-San Carlos on the north to Mountain View-Sunnyvale on the south, including Redwood City, Atherton, Menlo Park, Woodside, Palo Alto, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View and Sunnyvale.

When I became active in the temple and in the Centers, which was in the sixties, I also then became a little more active in Federation in that I was on some committees in the South Peninsula. Of course, the Federation didn't encompass as many things as it does now. It was more limited to a fundraising activity and then an allocation of those funds. It didn't get into social service quite as much and so on. On the other hand, you didn't have the agencies doing their own fundraising as much as they do now. In the mid-sixties, I guess, was when I really started to become more active in the Federation.

Glaser: Were you able to tap the wealth of Silicon Valley?

Seiler: Not really, not very much.

Glaser: They aren't really givers.

Seiler: Well, there were some. You know, it's hard to generalize. There is a high-tech group, by the way, in the South Peninsula, which is primarily engineering. Most of their money is new-found paper money. You know, through stock and things where they became wealthy very quickly. There are exceptions, but for the most part those people have not been active givers to the Federation. Over the years, however, more of them, as they've gotten more developed and more mature, have given. But, that has not been a major benefit to the Federation drive. The more time that goes by the better it gets, but it's been a struggle.

So, anyway, I began to get involved a little in the Federation in the South Peninsula. It was a matter of cards. It was a matter of some committees, you know, usually fundraising committees or allocation committees. But the South Peninsula, at that time, in the mid-sixties, was just beginning to emerge as a significant piece of the overall pie. At the same time, I was active at Beth Am. At Beth Am I was concerned that the Federation be identified as one of the partners, if you want to call it that, in the community of the temple. As such, I worked concurrently at the temple, and I had, not major, but some positions in the Federation in the South Peninsula.

Glaser: What was the effect of the '67 war on fundraising?

Seiler: Very significant. The '67 war really changed the dynamics, I think, of the Federation. It raised not only the amount of money but the involvement. A lot of people came out of the woodwork, so to speak. Many of them went back into the woodwork until '73 when they came out again. It raised involvement. In '67 there was an outpour of this kind of thing. In '67, I remember, we had major rallies at the temple for both Israel Bonds and for the Federation. The campaign itself was obviously an easier campaign because people were much more willing to participate. The sell, if you want to call it that, was much easier.

Toward the late sixties I was also on the board of the UJCC after having been involved in the Peninsula Center. Between the UJCC and exposure there to the Federation and the temple--I joined the board of the temple in 1965, so the timing was such that the '67 war was a particularly significant time. As an officer of the temple, it sort of worked together. You know, you find actually that the people who are charitably inclined, generally some of them are just one agency, or one unit, but for the most part you see the same people in different activities. So I became a vice chairman of the Peninsula campaign. This chronology says 1971, '72, which, I guess, is a little bit later.

Glaser: You were the chairman in '72.

Committee Assignments

Seiler: I was the chairman in '72. But I was involved with the Federation budget committee here in San Francisco in the late sixties. I was involved in some other committees, which frankly I don't remember.

Glaser: How did you get tapped for Federation committees?

Seiler: Because, in terms of San Francisco, I was on the UJCC board and I got to know people that were active in the Federation. Because of my activities in South Peninsula, I got to know people down there who were active. It's very easy to get tapped. All you have to do is take one step backwards instead of two and you're tapped. It's not a very hard thing to do. If you're willing to do some work and give a little money, you can rise very quickly through the chairs, so to speak. They're always looking for people, and the Federation wanted geographical dispersement of people, besides.

There aren't that many leaders in any area, and I was becoming a leader in the South Peninsula in other activities, and they reached out. I guess somebody I knew who was active (I don't remember who it might have been) called me and said, would I do this, would I do that. As I told you in an earlier interview, I don't say no very easily, so I did it and I wanted to do it.

Glaser: You were on the budgeting committee. That must have been a good way of learning about the different constituent agencies.

Seiler: Yes. That's true. That's true. You learned about that. Through the years I was on other agency boards, although I think I was more active during the time period we're talking about. The UJCC was the first agency board that I was on. Then, I became active in South Peninsula, in the campaign, and I became--I was head of a professional division at one point, or some division. Then I became a vice chairman of the South Peninsula campaign, and I was also chairman of the South Peninsula campaign in '72. During the same years, I was involved in the budget committee here in San Francisco overall, social planning committee, and a variety of other things, as they came up.

Federation Board Member, 1972

Seiler: Then I became chairman of the South Peninsula campaign, and I was asked to be on the Federation board. At the same time I was asked

to go on the Prime Ministers Mission--my dates might be off just a speck, it seems to me '72. The Prime Ministers Mission was a three-day mission to Israel. There were four of us that went, including Lou Weintraub, who was the executive at that time, Jerry Braun, Doug Heller, and I. The UJA charters a 747 out of New York, you fly there, and you spend two or three days in Israel, and you come back. I guess I had been to Israel once before, with my family.

I did that, and you come back from Israel kind of renewed. I was vice chairman of the overall campaign at that time, or going to be. We then had more of a ladder than we do now, as far as who becomes campaign chairman. In 1973, 1974 there were three vice chairmen of the overall campaign, of which I was one. Then the following year again I was a vice chairman.

Campaign Chairman, 1976

Seiler: Then in 1976, I became campaign chairman for the overall campaign.

Glaser: How was your campaign conducted?

Seiler: What do you mean, how was it conducted?

Glaser: How did you run the campaign?

Seiler: We had a campaign structure, as we do now, you know, and we had what we then called the Advanced Division, which was the larger givers. Then we had various geographical divisions, and we also various occupational divisions.

Glaser: Did you select your campaign cabinet?

Seiler: Yes. Yes. I selected them, I did the asking, and I solicited. As campaign chairmen we solicited maybe the top twenty or thirty gifts of the campaign. Not always by myself, but sometimes by myself and sometimes with somebody else. The 1975-76 campaign was conducted in a year that we also had a capital funds campaign. The campaign raised nine and a half million dollars or thereabouts at that time, which was sort of in line with what was going on. We did have the major competition of the capital funds campaign.

Fundraising Techniques

Glaser: Could I ask you about fundraising?

Seiler: Oh, all right.

Glaser: What do you think is the most effective way to raise funds?

Seiler: I think face-to-face solicitation is the most effective way, where peers are interacting together. If you assume, which I think is pretty well proven, that 80 percent of the money is raised from 20 percent of the people, I think it's key for a person to be asked and given the opportunity to interact with the asker, the solicitor, and to be educated a little bit. I think the most effective way is to say, "I've done this, why don't you do that."

Glaser: Did two people go to visit the big givers?

Seiler: Usually, it depends who it was. Certainly for the largest givers.

Glaser: I understand two is considered a community.

Seiler: Yes, I guess. I think two is more effective. I have one problem that I've had over the years, and that is because of the business I'm in. We have a fairly large number of wealthy Jewish clients. I, basically, don't solicit people who are clients of ours because I don't think it's really ethical to do that; particularly when I know all of their financial affairs. For the most part, I think clearly the most effective way is face-to-face.

Glaser: You said that your campaign in '75 and '76 was also the period of capital funds campaign.

Seiler: Of the capital funds campaign a separate campaign.

Glaser: How difficult did that make it for you?

Seiler: It made it a little more difficult, but we raised about the same money as we had the year before. We didn't increase, but we didn't decrease, as I remember.

Glaser: In '73, when you were vice-chairman of the Advance Division, that was the period of the war. That must have made it--

Seiler: Yes. As I remember, I'm not sure of this, the '73-'74 campaign, raised more money. Then it dropped back in '74-'75 and so on. And then I was '75-'76 campaign chairman.

Education Committee

Glaser: I think you started to tell me about being selected to head the education committee.

Seiler: Yes. Along the way, you know, once I became a member of the board of this and that and the other, I got to know a lot of the leadership on a one-on-one basis. So, I got a phone call one day that there was going to be a committee to study the day schools. We had three Jewish day schools in San Francisco at that time: we had Brandeis, we had Hillel, and we had the Hebrew Academy. The community was struggling with what direction to go in this. There was divided opinion. There had been some confrontations, particularly with the Hebrew Academy, so it was sort of in a state of flux.

I got a call from Mel Swig, who I knew somewhat. It was in later years that I got to know him far better, but I knew Mel Swig. He called and said they were setting up this committee to study Jewish education and make recommendations as to what the Federation and the community should do. He asked me to be chairman of it, and I agreed. We then set up a committee, hopefully representative of all the different constituencies. We had a couple of people from each of the schools, we had a representative of the board of rabbis, we had Federation people, we had mixed male and female. I mean we tried to get a broad-based committee, and, as I remember, we had twenty or twenty-five on the committee.

We had hearings and we visited the schools and so forth. At the time, as I remember, all the schools had financial problems. Brandeis and Hillel had particularly difficult financial problems. The committee must have lasted six or eight months. We ultimately made a recommendation to merge Brandeis and Hillel into one school. Hebrew Academy was certainly more Orthodox and more traditional than Brandeis, and Hillel was sort of between them, in terms of the degree of Conservative, Orthodox and Reform. We recommended merging Brandeis and Hillel, and I think we gave it a grant to facilitate that, and we ended up with two day schools. That committee got a lot of attention because it was kind of a hot potato issue. So, from that thing I became more well-known among the various people in the leadership.

Glaser: You know, there was an earlier study of Jewish education in 1966. Why was another study deemed necessary?

Seiler: Maybe using the word study for this committee is not exactly the right word. I think the issue was what's feasible for the

community, and what should the community support, what can they afford to support, how much is it going to cost, what are the deficits involved. We used the prior study as background material, but I think the circumstances were different.

Glaser: I see. This was to determine to have a community Jewish day school rather than just a day school as such?

Seiler: No, not really a community day school, but a day school. We were going to support it financially, and it was for the guidance of the Federation budgeting committee and for the leadership to try and determine what direction we should go. Also to get the various interests to buy into the process so that we, hopefully, would have had some agreement among everybody that this is the way we should go.

Glaser: But Brandeis Hillel today is considered a community school, is it not?

Seiler: Well, I don't know how you define community school. We've got probably six or seven or eight Jewish day schools in our Federation area now. I don't think Brandeis Hillel is any different than the other ones in terms of its definition. I mean, we don't have one community day school. At the time, there were two day schools in the community. This may be a play on words, but we don't have one that we say is our school.

Hebrew Academy

Glaser: I see. Tell me more about the relationship of Hebrew Academy to the Federation.

Seiler: Well, Rabbi Pinchas Lipner is someone who is very, very devoted to the success of the Hebrew Academy--along with other things. He's a person who is a dynamic leader in what he's doing. He is an activist. I say that as complimentary, not as critical. He's an activist and basically he and some of the community leaders didn't exactly get along in terms of tactics and in terms of approach. There was a lot of frayed nerves, you might say, on both sides. I haven't been out there for several years, but at the time I thought not only he but his group ran an excellent school. My relationship with him, although we got into a few clashes during this committee structure, has always been very positive. I respect him, but he is not somebody who conforms to the way everybody wants him to do things politically. That's his style and that's fine, you know.

Glaser: It must have been a shock when he had his students picket and parade in front of the Federation office.

Seiler: Yes, they broke in, either broke in or confronted--I think it was Lou Weintraub at the time. Those kinds of tactics were, you know --a lot of the established leadership did not like that. I can understand that. I believe in peaceful process, but sometimes I can see that you don't get anything by just peaceful process. I'm not going to pass judgment on that, but there were a lot of antagonisms.

DROME Associates

Glaser: In 1975, when you were on the social planning and budgeting committee, Drome Associates was formed to purchase land for developing land for a housing program for the poor.

Seiler: Oh, yes, at the Center location.

Glaser: Right. Were you involved in any way?

Seiler: I was not one of the members of it. The Drome Associates were five people who lived in San Francisco, who, basically, land-banked some property. I was only involved in that I knew about it. As part of the Federation leadership at that time, I was aware of it but I really wasn't directly involved in it.

Glaser: I thought, perhaps, you might have had some input into the finances.

Seiler: Not really, no.

Glaser: That turned out to be very successful.

Seiler: Yes, it did.

Capital Funds Committee

Glaser: In 1979, you were on the capital funds committee.

Seiler: Yes, I was chairman of the capital funds committee for three years.

Glaser: According to my notes, in 1979 that committee took the place of the allocations review committee. What were the committee's functions?

Seiler: I don't recollect that. What happened was, after I finished being campaign chairman--usually it takes a little bit of time for R&R after that. If the chronology is right, I was then asked to be chairman of the capital funds committee. The capital funds committee is a committee that studies and approves the capital projects in the community as opposed to the annual allocations. We have rules that say that any agency that we subvent who wants to do a capital construction or expansion or development, must have approval of the capital funds committee.

So, we would have an agenda. That committee also tries to assess the needs of the community. Since we're all one community and usually private fundraising is involved, as well as Federation or endowment support, you wouldn't want to have a lot of projects going at the same time. You try to prioritize them and you try to examine them and, hopefully, approve them. You don't approve all of them, but you approve many of them. I was chairman of that committee, as I remember, for three years. I was not chairman of the capital funds fundraising committee.

Glaser: Yes, I understand that.

Seiler: Peter Haas was chairman of that in 1975 and 1976. It included pledges over a five-year period.

Fundraising Committee

Glaser: You were on the fundraising committee at the same time.

Seiler: Yes, but most past campaign chairmen were on the fundraising committee, and that committee was to sort of set the parameters of how we shall conduct our campaigns. For a long time, you know, we've had a first line and a second line. Not always but many times, with the Russians and--

Glaser: The crises.

Seiler: The crises. The fundraising committee was in charge of the structure of the campaign and used to vote and determine who the campaign chairman would be. That was also a function in those years of the fundraising committee.

Sonoma County

Glaser: In 1979, Sonoma County was taken in as part of the Federation, and they were to be helped with their fundraising. Were you involved with that?

Seiler: We had at the time San Francisco, the North Peninsula, South Peninsula, and Marin. So they became another division of the Federation, albeit much smaller, but we expanded the Federation to include Sonoma. There were a number of Jews in Sonoma, that whole area, and they wanted to be included, and we accepted them as a division of the Federation.

Glaser: What kind of help did they have with their fundraising?

Seiler: They had membership on the board, they became part of the overall campaign as a division, just like we have any other division.

Confederation

Glaser: In 1981, the concept of confederation was approved by the East Bay and the San Francisco-based Federations.

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Seiler: There had been discussions among the professionals of three federations, initially, and an understanding that East Bay and San Jose were much smaller than we were.

Glaser: Didn't Sacramento come in on that?

Seiler: Sacramento was talked about coming in on that, but I don't think it ever got very far. I was either chairman or co-chairman of this committee, and we had a number of meetings among the executives and representatives of each of the three federations. It really didn't get very far because the problems became--. First of all, we were much bigger than they were. Our fundraising development was much more developed than theirs. The level of giving probably was higher here than in the East Bay or San Jose federations overall.

What happened was we were unable to work out a situation where it wasn't a senior partner-junior partner kind of thing, which I don't think either the East Bay or San Jose wanted, with good cause. On the other hand, we couldn't have an equal

partnership because we were raising maybe three or four times the money that the two of them were raising together. We had a number of meetings, and as I remember Billy Lowenberg might have been the co-chairman with me on that for us. I'm not sure but I think so. It just kind of dissipated because it became obvious that there were not as many advantages to merging as there were potential disadvantages, and I think mostly to the two smaller federations. The concern was that they would lose autonomy and so forth, and they probably would have. So, it didn't go very far.

Glaser: But it must have been a unique concept because the Federation got the Shroder Award for it.

Seiler: I was unaware of that, but the Federation probably got the Shroder Award while it was in bloom, shall we say. To say that it didn't go anywhere, I don't think that's a fair statement. I would retract that a little bit. We didn't merge, and we didn't have common boards, and so on and so forth. But I think what we ended up with was that there would be joint outreach and cooperation to where San Francisco and our outlying regions would try and assist East Bay and San Jose to grow their campaigns and to make our facilities available. We did have a number of joint activities (we still do, for that matter) over the years in a cooperative manner. But it was never one organization.

Glaser: Were Koret Foundations funds used for this?

Seiler: I don't remember that the Koret Foundation was anything like it is now in scope. It could have been that they made an allocation, but I don't remember when, frankly.

VI FEDERATION PRESIDENT, 1990-1992

Goals as President

Glaser: Your presidency was the years of 1990 to 1992. Did you have goals that you set for yourself?

Seiler: Well, that's a difficult thing to answer. I didn't want to reinvent the wheel. I felt that we had an effective organization. My goals were to make it work smoothly, to raise as much money as we could, to try and develop the relationship with the agencies. During this time the demands on the agencies, the financial demands that they had on themselves (I don't mean demands in terms of them demanding things from us) were growing significantly. Whereas we used to have a program that said they couldn't have their own fundraiser without our approval, and so forth, it became a practical impossibility. My goals were to try and just make the machine run better and hopefully to address the issues.

We had an ongoing issue, all of the time, during that period. The needs for Israel, the financial needs, the Russians, and so forth, were very consuming to the Federation. I mean, it was a major piece of what we were doing. That was sort of an ebb and flow thing. For example, the Olim came in, sometimes at a much quicker rate, sometimes at a slower rate, so you didn't have a constant flow. My goals were really just to make the thing work as well I could, to bring in as many people into the activity as I could, to try and motivate the people to make it better. I mean I didn't have goal of changing this to that, really.

On the other hand, there were a number of things that took place during my presidency which, I wouldn't say diverted the attention if I had specific goals, but which were basically time consuming and took in a lot of our effort.

Search for New Executive Director

Seiler: When I became president, I had expected that our executive, Brian Lurie, was going to be here for the two years of my presidency. In fact, the timing of my presidency was such that I hesitated because of the amount of time. I had hoped to do it a little bit later. But when I learned that Brian, as our executive, was going to leave in two years, and this was pre-dating the time when I took office, I sort of decided selfishly that I'd rather not be part of a transition if I didn't have to be.

Well, no sooner had I become president than within a few months, six months, whatever it was, Brian was offered the job as the chief executive of the UJA in New York. I expected that he would leave at the end of my term. I expected that toward the latter six months of my two-year term we would begin a search. Well, it happened a year earlier. I was just beginning my presidency, I'd been in maybe six months when we had to do a search for a new executive. That was a very significant part of my presidency, and it was very time-consuming activity. So that was one thing.

Operation Exodus

Seiler: Another thing that we had, which was ongoing, was Operation Exodus, which was ongoing because of the great exodus of people from the then-Soviet Union to Israel. The question, through the Council of Jewish Federations, came up of a loan guarantee program. The banks in Israel agreed to loan the Olim money, and then the loans were guaranteed by the Council of Jewish Federations. They in turn were guaranteed by each of the constituent federations, some two hundred. Well, the negotiations involved in that--the allocation of the liability, the agreements, the acceptance of potential liability for our Federation--was a very major thing in our financial health. So that was a major piece while I was involved.

Strategic Planning Implementation

Seiler: Also, we had had a strategic planning study done in 1989, and we tried to implement some of those things during my presidency.

Glaser: That was the result of the earlier demographic study.

Seiler: The demographic study then resulted in the strategic planning effort, which then resulted in some parts of it being adopted by Federation, some parts not. And there was some contention about that as well: what should be adopted, what should not be adopted. So that was another thing. Budgeting and planning was becoming more severe because the campaigns weren't growing quite as fast and yet the needs were growing. So, that was another issue.

Relationships with Synagogues

Glaser: I think one of your goals was to improve the relationship with synagogues.

Seiler: That's right. As I said earlier, I think that we're one community, and I think all facets of it have a place. The synagogues have their own problems, I realize, but I felt that the relationship between the synagogues and the Federation should be improved. We could bring some things to them, and they could help us in terms of the acceptance of the Federation. I realize that they're all competing for the same money, so to speak. But one of the things I did is I went to the endowment committee, as president of the Federation, and asked for the allocation of some seed money to start a process of assistance to synagogues. We allocated \$100,000 into a fund with the hopes that as this grew the allocation would grow. It has taken a couple of years, but they're now beginning to implement it, and there is an action committee that is doing that.

[I felt relations with synagogues were pretty important, and because of my background as a president of Beth Am I knew the other side of the picture. The synagogues have their problems, as we do. In a cooperative effort you've got two things. You can give advice and suggestions and help. I don't know how important that is to the synagogues, they know better than we do what's good for them. And you can give financial support for specific programs to try to build the two together. I felt you couldn't do one without the other. Just to give them advice, they don't need advice. Just to give them money alone, while certainly nice, even if they needed the money it doesn't do anything for us.

I was interested in having an effort to develop Federation/synagogue relationships in discreet areas where synagogues might be able to do something with several thousand dollars, and with our programmatic help as well, to develop some

joint areas. I feel the interactions between Federation and synagogues is crucial.]¹

So, among all of those things the two years goes by very quickly.

Department of Community Development

Glaser: One of the unique things that you did was to create a Department of Community Development that had various sub-committees.

Seiler: That's true. That was part of this process that we're talking about with synagogues and other things.

Glaser: Right, and you had the volunteer placement project, and council on inter-faith marriages, Jewish community information referral service--

Seiler: I can't claim credit for doing all of those things. Many were done while I was president, and a lot of people were involved in the activities. I guess if you're the head of it you get the blame for things, and you might as well take the credit for them. I was a player in that, but I was certainly not a major player. It took place during the time I was president.

Glaser: How did that whole idea come about to have this Department of Community Development?

Seiler: Because we had decided a few years back, in fact when Brian Lurie was still here, as part of the strategic planning that the Federation should be more than a fundraising organization. We should also assist the community in this rounded thing where we're all part of the same thing. So the strategic planning committee, plus the executive to some extent, felt that this was something that we really needed to do. We needed to do outreach, to try and develop more activities in the community, not just be a fundraising organization. That's how it evolved. The good news is, I think, it has significantly improved some relationships. The bad news is that it costs money that we don't always have, therefore it caused a little strain on budgeting. But if you're going to have a viable community, you've got to do these things.

¹Text in brackets is an insert from a preliminary interview on May 19, 1995.

Glaser: There are some people who believe that the emphasis on Jewish education takes funds and manpower away from the other agencies, the more social work kind of agencies.

Seiler: It's probably true that there are some people who believe that, and maybe a lot of people believe that. There are also people who believe that we don't need Jewish Centers. There are also people that believe that we don't need national agencies, or at least we shouldn't support them. I think there's a large element in this country in the Jewish community, Jewish leadership, that feels if we don't have Jewish education of some significant amount in the future, given all the inter-marriage and given all of the problems that we have, that this is a way to try, and if not increase the Jewish approach at least stem the decline of it. I don't happen to be somebody that would have considered sending my kids to a Jewish day school. But I do believe that if people want a Jewish day school we as a community ought to provide it.

Glaser: That ties in with the current buzzword of Jewish continuity, doesn't it? That goes hand in hand.

Seiler: Yes. True. Now, the people who are strongly for Jewish day schools will say that that's where your Jewish leadership comes from. I'm not sure that's true. It certainly wasn't true in my case, and I don't think it's true in any of the presidents' cases. But we didn't have many Jewish day schools. In the East, it might be different. But here, you know--but who's to say that it won't be. I believe, as I said a minute ago, not everybody who wants something should have it. But Jewish education is clearly a part of our focus in what we should be doing, and the fact there are some that don't think it's necessary, well, that's too bad.

Jewish Community Centers

Glaser: During your presidency, was there the first indication of the terrible state of the San Francisco JCC?

Seiler: Not really. The Centers have never been what we call a have agency. They don't have an endowment. When you say "first indication," while I was president it came to light that there was a deficit. The way they functioned was they take in money in advance for tuition, or whatever the payment is, and then they'd deliver programs as a result. We had meetings to discuss the deficit, and they had a program to reduce the deficit, and I believe did reduce the deficit.

I don't know that they ever got it back to zero, but it looked to be anything from a half a million to a million dollars at one point--not an annual deficit but an accumulated deficit. They had a program to begin paying it back, and so on and so forth. It did do that. What happened was as time went on, between the earthquake, which was, I think, before my presidency--

Glaser: The earthquake was in '89.

Seiler: Yes. It caused significant damage. Plus competition, for example, in the health program. I mean, you've got all the gyms around with new facilities, and the Center doesn't have a new facility. You've got a significantly increasing population who cannot or do not pay full share because they can't afford to. So, all these factors had come together. I think it's more recent, but the Centers have never been a strong, viable, financially-strong institution.

Now at the time I was president, the South Peninsula Center did secede from the UJCC and start their own agency. They raised the question as to whether or not the UJCC was necessary to continue. I felt at the time that we needed a central agency to oversee the centers. As opposed to having the Federation dealing with four of five different agencies, we should have one. In hindsight, maybe that wasn't a good choice because conditions have gotten worse, and now the UJCC is sort of going out of existence. But that issue came up, and I supported keeping the UJCC alive because I felt it was better for the community. It's no longer that way.

Glaser: I wonder, aside from the damage caused by the earthquake, if prior to that the San Francisco JCC had been given some help with its physical plant, perhaps it wouldn't be in the condition that it is now.

Seiler: Well, that could be, but the help with the physical plant, as I remember from the capital funds committee, was an issue of should you repair the plant. This was after I was president that these numbers came about. Cissie Swig was president during the time. To repair the plant as it exists was \$35 million, or some number like that. At the time, the Fireman's Fund building, close to where the Center is--it looked like University of California was going to sell that. There was long process to try and buy that. If they were to buy that, then you wouldn't renovate the Center.

Glaser: That's true.

Seiler: It took a couple of years, really, to go through all of that. The UC campus there did not become available while I was president.

We knew there was a problem, and that was in the wings. The problem was, number one, do you have \$35 million, and number two, if you don't have it can you raise it? And it just sort of dragged on and didn't get resolved. Did that contribute to the situation they're in now? Probably somewhat. But I'm not sure it was the major factor.

VII MORE ON A NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Selection Process

Glaser: Could I ask you to expand a bit on the selection process for the new executive director and the transition period?

Seiler: As I already told you, when I became president it looked like we were going to have two years. It turned out we had one. Brian Lurie was executive during my first year, Wayne Feinstein was executive during my second year.

Early in my presidency I undertook to appoint a search committee. I didn't want it too large, because it would be ineffective, but I tried to identify those areas where we needed representation. It obviously had to come from Federation leadership. It was a board committee; we didn't go outside the board. I first thought of who we could have to head the search committee, and we had three or four of the past presidents who said they'd love to head the search committee.

But I was concerned that whoever I appointed, somebody else would then be upset because they wanted to be appointed. So I decided that the only person who could be appointed who could not be accused of having a bias--I shouldn't say who could not be accused of having a bias but who was sort of neutral--was me.

It was logical, as president of the Federation, if I took this as being head of the search committee nobody could be offended. But if it were A, B, C, or D, others could be offended. So that was my first decision, that I would be chairman of it.

I then decided that, although logically most of the involved people were past presidents, if we loaded the committee with past presidents we're looking backward rather than forward. On the other hand, I couldn't ignore the fact the past presidents should

have some input. Plus a few of our largest givers were past presidents, and I couldn't ignore that. Also, I wanted to have a roughly equivalent number of men and women on the committee.

I wanted to have geographically dispersal. I wanted to have South Peninsula, North Peninsula, San Francisco, Marin. I didn't have Sonoma, it was too little and I didn't have room on the committee. I kind of made a list and juggled all of these things and ended up with three past presidents, including the immediate past president, with at least one representative from each geographical area, with the president of the Women's Division--

Glaser: Who was that?

Seiler: It was Joelle Steefel.

Glaser: What was the composition of the committee?

Seiler: So we ended up with a ten-person committee: Rabbi Michael Barenbaum, Annette Dobbs, Donald Friend, Richard Goldman, Peter Haas, Barbara Isackson, Joelle Steefel, Mel Swig, and Roselyne Swig.

We then determined that we had to have someone staff this committee, and I didn't want somebody inside because, again, it would be prejudicial, so I went outside. One of the things that we get from being a member of the Council of Jewish Federations is that they assist in executive searches. I talked to Marty Kraar, who was the executive head of the CJF, about it. He offered me a few of his staff people, and I told him that I would prefer to have him. He accepted, so he staffed the committee.

We then developed a significant list of potential people. As you can imagine, there aren't that many people who are both qualified and available for these positions. But the CJF had a list. We circularized the committee for a list, we let it be known in various circles, and we ended up with a list of about fifty candidates to start with. But of the fifty candidates, probably forty of them were not realistic for what we wanted. So we ended up with a list of about ten real candidates. We approached the ten or so. Of the ten we approached, about three or four of them were not interested right from the opening; they just weren't interested. We ended up, really, with about six or seven candidates. We brought each candidate who was from out of town in for interviews.

The way we set up the interviews was we brought them in for a day, or a day and a half. We broke the committee down into groups of one, two, or three so that we didn't have to have a

candidate do all the meeting with a large group, which is not as effective. One or two people got the candidate for breakfast, a couple of people met him for lunch, a couple of other times during the day. Then at four o'clock on the second day, we would have the whole committee meet with him. So we saw the candidate in private sessions and we saw them in group sessions.

Of that group, we ended up with about four or five candidates that we thought were viable. One of the candidates removed himself because he wanted a more observant community. I don't know if he was Orthodox or Conservative. He was from the East, and he felt that this was not as observant a community that he wanted to operate in. He wore a kippa, and he was very religiously observant, and this community is not entirely that religiously observant. So he removed himself.

It left us with about four candidates, and we discussed and so forth, and we settled on Wayne Feinstein. Wayne had been here eleven to twelve years before, he had been executive of Detroit, executive of Los Angeles, he worked for CJF in New York. He is a scholarly-type fellow, and he was the one who we ultimately decided to offer the job. We did, he accepted the job, and he came aboard in September, beginning my second year as president.

As with everything else, there were some people who would have rather had somebody else. The committee did vote unanimously, and then it was taken to the board and processed and so forth. In the June board meeting of 19--

Glaser: Probably 1991.

Seiler: Yes, June of 1991. We approved it at the board meeting, and then he moved here from Los Angeles, and he became our executive.

The Transition

Glaser: What about the transition period?

Seiler: First, the fact that he had been in this community, we didn't need a transition in terms of the make-up of the community, he understood that. He and I had weekly meetings for a long time in which we would go over things that should be done. He was not here very much while Brian was here. But he and Brian were very close friends and still are, I think. He had meetings with Brian, and Brian guided him somewhat. He made up a list of a great number of people that he should visit one-on-one, and he did.

The transition period, frankly, I felt was rather easy because he knew the community and he had been here before. He had also run two large community federations. So he knew the general things. And he did a lot of homework, voluminously written minutes, and interviewed with people, and so forth. So I didn't think that the transition was a very difficult one.

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Glaser: Please address the different styles of administration between Brian Lurie and Wayne Feinstein.

Seiler: I think you first have to start with the fact that Brian's a rabbi. As a rabbi, Brian brought to the administration of the Federation a background and a style which is probably more religious--not religious but more biblical, let's put it that way --and more personal in his interactions with people. He had a wonderful way of asking someone to do something and really making them feel very, very, good about what they were doing. He had a little laugh and a little smile and he could make the people feel that it was really a plus thing that they were doing no matter what it was.

Brian's style of administration was a little more nonspecific, I think, than Wayne's. He knew his objective and he wasn't set always in the way that he would attack the objective. He was concerned more with the results and with the personal relationships that he had, and as such he was very, very, effective.

He also had seventeen years in the job. When I was campaign chairman, I think he had been here one year, or maybe two. So I did have the opportunity of seeing Brian all the way along. But while I was president he had been in the job for seventeen years, and he basically ran the Federation. The old saying, presidents come and go but the executives are always there. He had a background and a history, really, more so than any president might have with respect to the recent history of our Federation.

Wayne comes in, and in fairness to Wayne he followed someone who had been here seventeen years, who was popular, and who had this way with people. Wayne, I think, knows his job very thoroughly, but he didn't have the instant recall that Brian would have of what happened. He's more structured than Brian is. Things are more black and white. As a result you tend to get people who either react positively or negatively to something more structured more often than you get people reacting positively or negatively to something that can move around a little bit.

I think Wayne came in at a little disadvantage. I don't know if you're a football fan, but it's like Steve Young coming in after Joe Montana, that type of thing. When you add to that the fact that we've had to have in the past three or four years two or three significant budget cuts, so there had to be some unpleasantness of terminations in the staff, and so on and so forth. Wayne has had a hard act to follow. I think that Wayne, administratively, is very good. I think he made a great effort with people. He has done a very good job. I'm very pleased with having Wayne as our executive. But he is no different than anybody else, he has his detractors and he knows it. But he makes a supreme effort to really try and do the job, and I think does the job well as a good leader of a Federation.

VIII ISRAEL

Overseas Committee

Glaser: I'd like to have you talk about Israel, both the Federation's and your own relationship to Israel. In 1984, you were on the overseas committee, which was created by a suggestion of Bill Lowenberg in 1983. Would you discuss that overseas committee.

Seiler: Israel became a major part of our Federation growth. If you take the pre-1967 and pre-1973 Federations, and you look at the money that was raised, or the focus of a lot of people in the community, I think that Israel, along with all the community, is the major piece of what we're there for. I really believe (although this is not a direct answer to your question) that the establishment, the survival, the respect that Israel has gotten worldwide has made the American Jew be in a better position vis-a-vis his neighbors and the Christian community than he ever has been. Whether it's for that reason, whether it's but for the grace of God go I, Holocaust survivors, whatever, Israel is a center piece of what we're doing.

More than half of the money that was raised would go to UJA. It's now something less than that, but it's been more than that for a long time. A lot of people will give because of the impact of Israel. So the establishment of the overseas committee, I think, recognized the fact that we need a specific focus in this Federation on Israel.

I was a member of the overseas committee a couple of different times. It evolved into something where, as I'm sure you know, we have currently a relationship, and have had for about ten years, with Kiryat Shmona. We have other relationships in Israel; we have our Amuta, which has been functioning very well. One of things that Brian did, for which we got very great criticism, both Brian and our community, was to establish a separate allocation,

outside of the Jewish Agency and the UJA, to go directly for things in Israel.

All of those things together meant that the overseas committee was a very integral part of our Federation activities. It related us to them and them to us. Over the years the overseas committee makes annual trips to Israel. I've been twice on those trips. They view what they're doing, what the Federation is doing. They keep the link, plus they interpret what should be done, and it is a major focus of what we're doing.

Glaser: You mentioned Kiryat Shmona, is Project Renewal part of the overseas committee?

Seiler: Project Renewal, yes. I don't remember the technical aspect, whether it was within or without, but it clearly is a part of what the overseas committee is doing. And all of the things relative to the other activities that we've done are part of the overseas committee. It's the place where the people meet and cover everything that we do in this respect.

Challenges to United Jewish Appeal and the Jewish Agency

Glaser: With Brian's leadership, the UJA and the Jewish Agency were challenged as to both their organization and their functions. Would you discuss that?

Seiler: At the time that that happened, I don't even remember whether I was on the board. I've been on the board for most of the last twenty, twenty-five years, but there have been times, because you have to rotate off, that I was not. There was a hiatus, and I think during that time maybe I was not on the board. But I was well aware of what was happening.

This challenge, you know, we had people from the national come to us and basically try and have us not to do it. But we did it, and I think in hindsight it turned out that it was a very positive thing to do. It is generally accepted by people for the most part now. I think this was a combination of Brian plus whoever was in the leadership at the time. I was really not part of that. I agreed with it and supported it, but I was not much of a player.

"Who Is a Jew"

Glaser: You were on the ad-hoc committee that dealt with, "Who Is a Jew." Could you talk about that?

Seiler: That again, you know, was a major challenge, particularly to the Reform community. I would call it a no-brainer for us to be involved with the "Who Is a Jew" movement because it was opposite to everything that we feel, and certainly that I feel. The Reform movement in Israel has not gotten very far. To have it go backwards would have been a terrible thing. Not only a terrible thing for us and for Israel, in my view, but potentially for the Federation, which would have lost a tremendous amount of support. The reason that we opposed it was not because it would lose the support, we opposed it as individuals. But one of the fallouts would have been a tremendous drop-off in our support, and we had to address that as well.

Missions to Israel

Glaser: During your term of presidency, the Federation sponsored the Mega Mission, the Shalom '91.

Seiler: Right. Right. Shalom '91 was started or planned during Annette Dobbs's presidency, who was my predecessor. It was headed up by Dick and Cissie Swig. It was probably as a big mission in contemplation as had ever been undertaken. And it ended up being a very successful mission. One of the unfortunate problems was that the Iraqi war started three or four months before we were to go, as I remember the timing, and we lost some people. That was a joint effort with Oakland, San Jose, and Sacramento. We ended up, with, I think, around 250 people that went. It was a very exciting thing, and the leadership worked really hard with it. Brian was very involved in it. Since that time there have been a number of other communities that have done it. But we were in the forefront of that. I happened to be president at the time it happened. We went, obviously, and we got other people to go, but I was not in any way a chairman of it.

Glaser: Talk about missions altogether.

Seiler: You can't go to Israel on a mission and not come back so motivated. To see what they do, to have your feet on the ground, and to see the whole--it puts it all into perspective as to why are we doing what we're doing. Whether it's to Israel or to the

Jewish Home, I guess it's still a mission. But there's something about going to Israel on a mission that just inspires people to do things far beyond what they thought they might do, not only money wise but in terms of participation as well.

The first mission I went on was the Prime Minister's mission, which I spoke of a little while ago. Then, while I was campaign chairman, we took a small mission to Israel. There were about eight or nine couples. This was for larger givers, and there was also concurrently a mission for smaller givers. This was the second mission I went on.

I've been a couple of other times on missions, and every time you end up with people who get within them the feeling, and it causes them to become better members of the cause that we're trying to promote. I think there's no substitute for it. It's something that if you could get everybody there, you'd have a much more involved community, not only just for fundraising but for other reasons too. It makes you feel good about your Jewishness. You know, if you go to New York from San Francisco you stand on the corner and one out of three people are Jewish. But you go to Israel and the majority are Jewish, it's a different feeling. It's a very exciting thing to do.

Fundraising for Israel

Glaser: What is going to be the future of the relationship between the Diaspora in the United States and Israel, when Israel seems to be very prosperous and not as dependent? Some leaders in Israel have made a statement that they don't need the help of the Diaspora.

Seiler: Well, first of all, taking the last point first, there's one major leader, who has made this statement, and that is Yossi Beilin. It came out right before the G.A. in Denver last year. He came out with a statement, and there was a big article in the Wall Street Journal about it, where he said what you've just alluded to. Israel doesn't need the Diaspora any more, keep your money, we'll do it in an other way, and so on.

I think the leadership--Netanyahu and Rabin and the bulk of the leadership--doesn't say that. In fact, just a week after Beilin came out with what he said, Rabin spoke at the G.A. and he, basically, was critical of what was said. But, having said that, Beilin is not entirely wrong in the perception of a lot of people. It's a significant problem in the fundraising life of the Jews in the Diaspora, particularly the next generation. Israel is not the

underdog that they once appeared to be. Plus they are prosperous. The needs are still tremendous, but the perception is that they don't need us as much anymore.

This is a major problem for federations and for other Jewish agencies that goes into the future. One of the reasons that the percentage of the overseas allocations has declined is because the local needs have become more significant. But there's been an awful lot of money raised for Israel, and there'll continue to have to be a lot more money raised for Israel. I think that the federations have to really mount an effort to combat this because the feeling is growing that this is the case.

Glaser: You have in San Francisco several organizations that are raising money for institutions in Israel--Weizmann Institute, Friends of Hebrew University, et cetera--how does this impact the Federation?

Seiler: There's no question that Jewish philanthropy has grown significantly over that last twenty-five or thirty years, whereas the Federation has not grown as much. It's obvious; it impacts it because it takes away money that otherwise might go to the Federation and allocated to all the agencies. The agencies themselves are raising a lot of money. The problem is it's sort of a Catch-22. You'd like to have control, but at the same time if you can't raise the money to give them what they need, what are they going to do? What the Federation is trying to do is improve relationships with all these various entities and try and do it cooperatively.

As far as Weizmann and Hebrew University, they were doing that twenty-five years ago. Instead of three or four institutions, now there are ten institutions of higher learning in Israel that are doing it--the University of the Negev, Tel Aviv University, and so on and so forth. But that's nothing new. One of the things you do as part of the community is you go to an awful lot of dinners that are put on by these various organizations. You probably do more while you're president, but I still do plenty.

It always has intrigued me that you go these events, and you see large constituencies, in some cases for these agencies or other charities, who are part of the Jewish community but not part of Federation. Each one seems to have it's own constituency. Now there's a lot of overlap if you want to call it that. But, basically, you can go to an event for Family Service or for the Jewish Home, and there'll be a number of people who are active in Federation. But the large preponderance of them are people who are not active in Federation. And as the giving gets bigger, the

whole issue of targeted giving and designated giving comes into play.

Glaser: Would you define those terms?

Seiler: In other words, when you give to Federation for the most part you're giving money to be dispersed by either the allocations committee or, in the case of the endowment fund, the endowment committee. If you want to give a six-figure gift, for example, many people want to have a target or a designation that they prescribe, not the board of the Federation, or not a group of other people.

Increasingly, the Federation movement is having to recognize that. And they're having to say, "We're going to have to have a designated-giving potential with our giving as well." Hopefully, it'll be plus giving. So somebody gives \$50,000 a year in the annual campaign, for example. Instead of going to them and saying, "We want you to increase it to a hundred," maybe we have got to go to them and say, "Now look, we want you to increase the general amount that you give, but also if you'd like to make a major increase, we would allow you to designate where that goes."

If you allow them to designate the basic amount, then you're not going to have an umbrella campaign. But there's got to be some way, and the Federation's working on that, to try and develop some way to meld in the designated giving with the general giving, most particularly in the endowment fund area, which is an area that I've had major involvement in, which we haven't talked about yet.

Glaser: We will next time.

Seiler: Yes.

IX JEWISH COMMUNITY ENDOWMENT FUND

[Interview 3: August 8, 1995] ##

Allocations Committee

Glaser: The first mention in the board minutes of your participation with the Endowment Fund came in 1986. Were you involved earlier than that?

Seiler: Yes, I think I was. I believe that I was a member of the endowment committee prior to that, because in 1986 I became involved with the allocation portion of the endowment committee.

Glaser: You were vice-chairman of allocations in 1986.

Seiler: Vice-chairman?

Glaser: Vice-chairman that year and then chairman of allocations in 1988.

Seiler: The way the Endowment Fund operates is there's a chairman of the Endowment Fund and then there's a chairman of the allocations subcommittee. I was on the endowment committee, or involved with the endowment committee, and then I became chairman of the allocations portion. I was chairman of allocations for a couple of years.

Glaser: What were your responsibilities?

Seiler: The way the Endowment Fund works is that organizations make applications to the endowment committee for allocations. That is then screened and reviewed by Phyllis Cook and her staff. They then prepare recommendations to the endowment committee for funding for various organizations or activities.

Then there are three subcommittees of the endowment committee's allocations subcommittee: culture and public affairs, education and youth, and family and health. Those three subcommittees then hold meetings where they review the applications for allocation, the ones that fall within their purview.

The proponents come in and make a presentation, as normally is done for allocations in most organizations, and then the subcommittees make recommendations to the overall committee. Those recommendations are made twice a year. The person who is the chairman of the allocations works with the three subcommittees and then makes the presentation to the overall endowment committee at these two large meetings for each of maybe fifteen or twenty or twenty-five endowment allocation requests.

The job of the allocations chairman is to work with the subcommittees, to attend the subcommittee meetings for the most part, to then run the portion of the endowment committee allocation meeting where this is finally voted upon. The major portion of that meeting is taken up with this, and then, assuming the endowment committee votes on it, (they sometimes adjust the amount, or accept or reject a particular recommendation) they vote on the overall allocation for the year. It then goes to the Federation board for approval. And, assuming that it is approved, it becomes operative.

Glaser: Let me back up and ask you how or why you became involved with the Endowment Fund.

Seiler: How I became involved, I guess, is that somebody asked me. I don't remember that. But the reason I became involved is it's an area of interest that I have. In my professional life, I'm dealing with clients who have charitable interests. Some of the Jewish ones are interested in participating in Federation endowments, in Federation philanthropic funds, which is part of the Endowment Fund. So as a result, originally I had quite a bit of interaction, professionally, with it.

Because of my involvement in Federation overall, I think I had a natural combination of things which made it make sense. I was interested in it, I understood the financial part of it, I understood the tax part of it. And it was something that I felt strongly about in that I felt it was important that we build a significant endowment in this community, not only for the future but for the present.

Established As a Standing Committee, 1976

Glaser: In 1976, the Endowment Fund became a standing committee of the Federation. Did the Council of Jewish Federations play any role in this?

Seiler: I don't know, but I would tend to doubt it. Every city doesn't invent the wheel for themselves; I mean they see what other cities do. Through the involvement in the Council of Jewish Federations, which resulted in various meetings with other cities, there may have been some assistance in the formulation of it, I really don't know. I don't think I was involved in it at that time.

The original leaders of the Endowment Fund were people who, I think, felt strongly about it. I would say they were the ones who basically had the strong effort in it. I mean people like Bob Sinton and Mel Swig and Peter Haas--the leaders at that time. I would guess that maybe the Council of Jewish Federations provided some technical information or outlines of the way things were run professionally. But I don't think that they had much to do with the establishment of it.

Glaser: Is the Endowment Fund a separate corporation?

Seiler: No. It is in some cities. It is not in our Federation. It is a department or a section of our overall Federation.

Glaser: What skills does the executive director of the Endowment Fund need?

Seiler: I think it's a combination of skills and motivation and desire. Number one, I think they need extreme dedication to the building of an Endowment Fund, because it is not something where you go out and ask for something and the response comes, "Yes I will," immediately in most cases. It needs perseverance, it needs somebody who's dedicated and will continue to try and identify projects, work with the prospects and the prospective donors. In many cases, it's a very long term job.

They need to have an understanding of the legal rules that are involved with it. They need to have an understanding of the tax laws, which are very significant in promoting some of the endowment results. They need to have an understanding of the other side of it, the distribution side. What organizations are in need, what the criteria should be, what's going on in the community, not only locally but internationally. It's a combination of knowing how to go about creating an endowment fund, what the rules are, what the interaction is, and what you do with

the money when you get it. There has to be a clear vision of where you want the Jewish community to go.

Chairman, Jewish Community Endowment Fund, 1988-1990

Glaser: What is the relationship of the executive director with the volunteers of the fund?

Seiler: Well, I can best tell you of my own experience. Phyllis Cook is the executive director of the Endowment Fund. For the three years or so that I was chairman of the Endowment Fund, there was a lot of interaction. I think that clearly the professional person does most of the work. The lay leadership is a good sounding board, hopefully, who innovates some ideas once in a while, carries out the mission of the Endowment Fund, makes the contacts. Although in Phyllis's case, she has a very wide network of people that she works with, and, you know, she can make her own contacts. So it's sort of a team approach. The volunteer person also serves as a very good sounding board, and Phyllis as well--back and forth with ideas. But the bulk of the work and the effort is done, really, in our community by the professional. The contacts are made by both the professional and the volunteers.

Glaser: Did you bring an added dimension to your chairmanship of the overall Endowment Fund because of your area of expertise in public accounting?

Seiler: Did I bring an added dimension? I don't know, somebody else would have to make that judgment. But I think in terms of what I brought to it was quite a good understanding of how the Federation works, from my involvement in Federation; obviously an understanding of the tax laws, which are very significant; probably a better understanding of the tax laws than any of the other chairmen have had because they're not in this business. So to that extent, I certainly think I did bring something. Plus, you know, it's a matter of experience also. In my profession I see what others do. It's not a question of just seeing what the Federation does, I see what other people, other religions, other organizations do. I guess I probably brought something from that point of view as well.

Committees

Glaser: In a 1990 article that appeared in the Jewish Bulletin, you were quoted as saying, "The Endowment Fund's primary purpose is to meet emergency needs and seed new projects and social service programs needed in the Jewish community." In order to do this, how is the Endowment Fund organized, and what are the various committees and how do they function?

Seiler: I already explained to you a few minutes ago how it was organized.

Glaser: Well, you didn't tell me about the various other committees.

Seiler: There are three permanent allocation subcommittees that receive the applications, interview the applicants, and make a recommendation to the endowment committee as to how the money should be dispersed. Additionally, there is an executive committee of the endowment committee, which is comprised of eight or ten people, usually the past chairpersons plus other people who are quite active. That committee decides policy on things such as spending guidelines, such as the rules affecting the philanthropic fund, such as whether we should charge for philanthropic fund maintenance (which we do not, by the way), as to what kind of outreach we should have, as to what kind of programming we should have. All of those things the endowment executive committee basically studies.

In addition, we have an Endowment Fund development committee, that is a group of seven or eight of us, again. Some past chairpersons and some major donors who have undertaken the job of attempting to get the major donors in the community to endow their gifts after their death so that the continuity of the Endowment Fund and the continuity of the regular campaign can be continued. That group meets probably three times a year, goes over lists of potential donors, takes assignments for contact. Either they themselves will take the assignment, or they'll suggest who should take the assignment, to try and reach people to endow their gifts, and it has been very successful.

Glaser: You were a chairman of that in 1992. Are you still chairman?

Seiler: I was chairman--no, I was not chairman of that in 1992, I don't think. In 1992, I was still president of the Federation. I was chairman of the endowment committee from 1988 to 1990, of the overall committee. I was endowment committee chairman and then I became president of the Federation, but I had been on this endowment development committee for some years. Mel Swig was the chairman of the endowment development committee. Then when he

died Gerson Bakar became the chairman and is presently the chairman of the endowment development committee. So you've got the endowment development committee, you've got the endowment executive committee, and you've got the three allocation subcommittees.

Recipient of Special Endowment Achievement Award, 1992

Glaser: In 1992, you were given the Council of Jewish Federations' Special Endowment Achievement Award.

Seiler: Yes.

Glaser: Was this something unique to your contribution and this Federation vis-a-vis other federations?

Seiler: I don't honestly know how to answer that. I'm not sure. Others in our community I believe, have gotten that award, not many of them, but they have gotten it. The Council of Jewish Federations does not give an Endowment Achievement Award to each community every year. I really don't know how many they give. I guess they thought because I had worked for some time in the Endowment Fund, they thought I should have that. But I don't really know how many others get it. I'm not the only one who ever got it, however.

Glaser: But if they don't give it every year, then it is something special.

Seiler: Yes. That's true. I'm not going to deny that I think it's special, but I'm not so sure how many others get it.

Israel Investment Philanthropic Fund

Glaser: One of your first acts as Endowment Fund chairman was to institute an Israel Investment Philanthropic Fund. Would you talk about that, please?

Seiler: Yes. I have been involved, although never chairman of it, in the Israel Bond Program for many years. I believe it's not a contribution but is an area of support of Israel which is different from the Federation, which is charitable. The Israel Bond Organization for many, many years has been selling Israel bonds and raising money that goes to help Israel. In this case,

Israel borrows the money; nonetheless it provides a service, and for many years I've been involved in that.

I decided that it made sense if people wanted to buy bonds and put them in the Endowment Fund. That would facilitate both things; it would facilitate giving money charitably to the Federation, and it would then facilitate having the Federation with that money buy Israel bonds and loaning it to Israel, since if you give it to the Endowment Fund it doesn't automatically go to Israel. Some people may have the desire to buy the bonds but buy them philanthropically.

I felt that this was a way to make that option available to people. They could set up a philanthropic fund for the purpose of buying Israel bonds, make contributions to the Federation, so it became the Federation's money in the long run, designate it to buy Israel bonds with, and then the Federation would hold the Israel bonds in the Israel bond philanthropic fund for five years at a minimum because you can't redeem them in less than five years.

Then after the five years the individual who had set it up could ask that they be redeemed and then could use the money for other philanthropic purposes, as they do a regular philanthropic fund. It was to try and help the Israel Bond Organization have another market place. I recommended that, in fact I set up the first one for our family. I don't know how many of them there are now, I know there are more but I don't know how many, but it's been an effective tool.

Types of Funds

Glaser: You have philanthropic funds, you have non-restrictive funds--

Seiler: You're talking about the endowment funds?

Glaser: Yes.

Seiler: Yes. You have philanthropic funds, you have unrestricted endowment funds, you have Israel bond philanthropic funds, you have restricted endowment funds, you have supporting foundations, all of those things are under the umbrella of the Endowment Fund.

Glaser: Please describe each. You've talked about the Israel bond fund, would you talk about the others.

Seiler: All right. The philanthropic fund is a fund where you contribute money to the Federation, and it is what is known as a donor-advised fund. The money resides in an account for you within the Endowment Fund called the philanthropic fund. You can make recommendations for that money to go to the Federation or to other charities.

It's not limited just to Federation, nor is it limited to Jewish charities, but there must be some connection. Either it's assisting some people that are Jewish, but it also can assist those who are not Jewish. We can make a contribution, for example, and many do, to the University of California, or University of San Francisco or to Stanford, or to Harvard--where there are Jewish students. There is a wide latitude of choice. It must be to a 501(c)(3) organization, which is the Internal Revenue code section which governs this type of thing. The money resides there, and it in turn is used by the donor. The donor doesn't legally have control over it but can make recommendations to the Federation Endowment Fund to disperse the money. As long as the recommendation is not something beyond the purview, or beyond the legal availability for the Endowment Fund, we normally like to accommodate the donor.

Along with it is a provision that when the person dies, whatever is left in that fund goes to the Federation. The hope is that it also encourages Jewish philanthropy and helps the Federation because people will be more affiliated because of this and therefore will look more favorably on the needs of the Federation and its agencies. So, that's the philanthropic fund. And it has the tax advantage that you can put it in this year and decide later when to give it out, as opposed to somebody who wants to make a contribution but doesn't always know how much and to whom they want to give it. This allows you to warehouse the money (a term I like to use), but it belongs to the Federation, it does not belong to you.

The restricted endowment funds within the Endowment Fund are individual funds, where somebody sets up a fund, makes a contribution to the Federation, and restricts the use of the funds, the income and/or the principal, for specific uses. Somebody might decide that they want to set up an endowment fund to help some form of Jewish education, for example, or to help the Centers, or to help elderly, or infants--whatever it happens to be. They can restrict the use of the funds in that endowment fund for a specific use. That's what's known as restricted fund. The donor does not have discretion as to what happens to the money specifically but has set up a field of interest, you might say. So at the beginning they can restrict the use of it to the purposes that they want.

The unrestricted endowment fund is the type of fund, of course, that the Endowment Fund likes the best. It is where somebody endows money to the Federation Endowment Fund and there are no restrictions on it. So the endowment committee can take that income and can decide, in their choice, where that money goes. The advantage to that is conditions change, and where conditions change things come along which perhaps a donor had no idea would happen. It allows flexibility on behalf of the Endowment Fund to take care of things they would otherwise like to take care of, and the donors leave it then to the endowment committee.

The endowment committee is comprised of thirty or forty of the leading donors in the community, so those people on the endowment committee presumably have a good deal of charitable intent. In an unrestricted fund, the hope is that by their collective wisdom it will go to good things, and it allows the Federation flexibility.

The last thing, which is a newer kind of fund but growing, is what's called a supporting organization. A supporting organization is a separate corporation organized to support the activities of a particular charity but is not subject to the governance of the charity itself. The rules require that a majority of the board of directors of the supporting organization are nominated by the supported charity. The purpose of it is for larger gifts, where a family wants to continue to have involvement, and maybe they want to have their children involved. They want to do certain things for charity but at the same time do it in a family way.

You give X number of dollars to a supporting organization, under the auspices of the Federation, and let's assume you have five members on the board of directors. Two of the members can be from the family, and three of the members must be public members that are appointed by the charity, so that the majority of the board is governed by the charity. It is its own mini-endowment fund. It has income, the board of directors determines where that money will be dispersed, and it is run as a separate organization.

This is better for larger amounts of money because the administration of a small fund in a separate corporation is probably not very cost effective. It is designed as something which is sort of related to private foundations, but it has better tax advantages than private foundations because it's under the auspices of a public charity.

Investments

Glaser: You mentioned income, which means the monies that come into the Endowment Fund are obviously invested. What kinds of investments?

Seiler: A balanced investment portfolio--stocks, bonds, money market instruments, as any other investment portfolio you would have. Sometimes somebody gives the Endowment Fund a piece of real estate or something, but usually it's liquid stocks and bonds that's the bulk of the investment. There are also some Israel bonds, owned by the Federation as part of the Endowment Fund. Historically, you know, securities have earned maybe 10 percent, give or take, a year.

We have a spending guideline of 6 percent. This does not include restricted funds, but the endowment committee can allocate 6 percent of the corpus each year to various charitable purposes, and there are some other specific rules that we follow. It can allocate 6 percent, and then there's administration costs, and, hopefully there's something left for the Endowment Fund to grow as well. With the stock market doing as well as it has in the last ten or fifteen years, there has been growth as well from funds, even though we disperse the 6 percent from funds, where the market value has grown. We are constantly concerned, however, that if it should turn the other way we have to be careful, because we don't want to dissipate funds.

Glaser: Who makes the investment decisions?

Seiler: There's the Federation investment committee, but it's primarily related to the Endowment Fund. The investment committee is comprised of ten or twelve people, a few of whom are senior officers of the Federation, many of whom are in the investment business in the community, money managers and investment managers. Usually the chairman of the investment committee is an investment manager in the community.

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Glaser: What is a shelf foundation?

Seiler: A shelf foundation is a separate legal entity, it's a corporation. What happens many times is that donors will decide that they want to set up one of these supporting organizations, for example. However, people being as they are, many times they make their decision and they want to proceed immediately. If you have to go through the legal effort of organizing the corporation, the by-laws, getting to register, going through all of that takes a

little bit of time. What we normally do is we have one or two corporations which don't have anything in them but which have legal standing, that we can use for somebody who wants to do it right away. So, we have it in waiting, and the term is that it's on the shelf, because you can just take it off the shelf, change the directors, and get it into operation. It's just sort of having an organization ready when somebody wants to do it.

Glaser: I came across that there is a J and A Supporting Foundation. This is part of what you had described before?

Seiler: Yes. This is a supporting organization. You can name the supporting organization anything you want. The people who set that particular foundation wanted to call it the J and A Supporting Foundation. I would assume, maybe, they didn't want their name publicly identified with it. Some people like more identification than others. This particular one was set up and they wanted the name J and A. I happen to know who that is, and they are rather private people, and J and A represents parts of their names.

Glaser: Is there a difference between a trust and a fund?

Seiler: Well, yes, there is. There is a legal difference. A trust is where you have trustees and you have a trust instrument which governs what you can do with the money. A fund, within the Federation, is not a separate trust but it is a portion of the Endowment Fund. Effectively, you can do many of the same things, but yes, there is a difference, it's a legal difference.

Marin Jewish Community Center

Glaser: Would you describe the role of the Endowment Fund in the development of the Marin Jewish Community Center?

Seiler: Yes, that's something that I had a great deal to do with from the Endowment Fund side. The Marin JCC undertook to build a new campus together with the Brandeis Hillel Day School and the Reform congregation in Marin, Rodef Sholom. They had an architect, and they had plans, and they had a budget, and they went out and commissioned these people. And because we have the capital funds committee in the Federation, and any agency in the community that is funded by the Federation must have approval from the Federation, the project came to the Federation.

In this case, the Marin Jewish Community Center and the Brandeis Hillel Day School were both agencies of the Federation; the congregation is not. They brought it to the capital funds committee, and I was on the capital funds committee too, earlier. I think it was in the late eighties, as I remember. They made the proposal, and the Federation approved the proposal on the condition that the dollars spent were a certain amount, and there was going to be an endowment fund in the total package, and that the money was raised from the community.

They had a certain amount of the money lined up, and the Federation agreed out of its Endowment Fund, which is something we do, to make a contribution of a million dollars toward that capital project. That's one of the allocations that the Endowment Fund makes out of its income.

What happened was that the project ended up costing significantly more than had been originally talked about. If you've ever built something you'd know it doesn't all happen--it sort of grows on its own. It ended up that the amount of money that was raised did not meet the amount of money that they needed to complete the project. So the Federation Endowment Fund, in addition to making a grant of a million dollars to the project, made a loan to the consortium of these three organizations of two and a half million dollars to help fund the project.

Of course you realize that charitable contributions are normally staged over a period of time. And yet when you build a project you've got to pay for the project right now. So you've some kind of bridge financing to take care of the shortfall. They didn't have that. So what we ended up doing was loaning them two and a half million dollars, it might have been two point three or four. I'm not sure that we ever got to two million five. But we loaned them the money, and they in turn assigned to us the pledges that they had, which as they collected would go to repay the Endowment Fund. The thing worked pretty well. I think now it's down. I think they might still owe a hundred, or two hundred, or three hundred thousand dollars. But, basically, the bulk of the money has been repaid.

We also felt that, while we had to charge them interest, we could charge them an amount of interest which, hopefully, would be less than they'd have to pay at the bank, so that we could save the project some money as well.

Glaser: Why did you feel you had to charge them interest?

Seiler: For the Endowment Fund to loan an agency money you are taking money out of your endowment, which otherwise would earn interest

in the investment side, which interest would then be available to give to other agencies. When we decided that we were going to give them a million dollars as a grant, that was the amount we felt appropriate. To give them an interest-free loan over many years would change the grant. We wanted to be fair to anyone who wanted the money. So therefore, since we took the money out of our investment portfolio, we asked them to repay us the income we would have made in our investment portfolio.

Glaser: Well, that sounds fair enough.

Seiler: Yes, we thought it was.

Glaser: There recently was an article about the Jewish Founders Network that was established in 1990 and based in San Francisco. It's an association of national Jewish contributors to Jewish and secular causes. Would this be in competition with the Endowment Fund?

Seiler: I frankly don't know what it is. I have not heard of it.

Glaser: This was written up in the Jewish Bulletin about two or three issues ago.

Seiler: I must have missed it. Is it competition? I guess technically it is competition. On the other hand, you know, you find in most of these charitable endeavors that there are different groups of people that affiliate with different organizations. If this particular organization were to try and get Federation donors to give them money rather than to the Federation, I guess it would be competition. In my view, it's more likely that maybe these are groups of people that are not affiliated with the Federation, and the fact that they're raising money, assuming that it's legitimate, I think is a positive thing for Jewish philanthropy. I would hope that it's not directly competitive. On the other hand, it has to be a little bit competitive if somebody has a choice to do one or the other.

Philanthropies

Glaser: In looking over the most recent annual report of the San Francisco Foundation, I see that there are Jewish names of those who have funds or trusts in it. Does this take away from the San Francisco Jewish community?

Seiler: Well, of course it does. But on the other hand, there's nothing to say that somebody has to do it with us rather than them. I

think the largest fund in the San Francisco Foundation is the Koshland Fund.

Glaser: The Daniel Koshland Fund.

Seiler: Yes, the Daniel Koshland Fund, and it's some fifty million dollars, or something like that. I also read the report. Would we like to have it in the Federation Endowment Fund? Of course we would. Dan Koshland was a fine man, was active in and a major donor to the Federation. For whatever reason, he chose to do it with the San Francisco Foundation. There are a lot of Jewish names in there, and a number of our leaders have been president of the San Francisco Foundation. Rhoda Goldman was, Peter Haas was, and some others. I'm not sure, but I at least know those two. Everything doesn't have to be in one place, but it does represent competition for us.

Glaser: If you have enough money, you can spread it around.

Seiler: Well, sure. But if somebody would rather give there than the Federation, that's their personal choice. Even more than that, there are many, many private foundations in this community. The most known ones, I guess, in terms of the Jewish community, are the Koret Foundation and the Walter and Elise Haas Fund. Also the various Haas family funds that are either private foundations or a number of the Haas family funds at the San Francisco Foundation. The Osher Foundation is another large private foundation.

There are a lot of foundations, so we're not the only game in town, but we are one of the games in town. They're all in competition, but, you know, it's just the way that it is, and I think at least it gets more philanthropy out of it. But would I rather have it here than in the San Francisco Foundation, of course.

Glaser: In the last few years, the Federation campaign has raised less money, or at least, it's stabilized. Has this affected funds coming in to the Endowment Fund?

Seiler: I don't think so, the Endowment Fund has been growing. It's a different thing. The annual campaign has much broader participation. The Endowment Fund has more limited participation. People generally look at an endowment fund as they get older and think more in terms of perpetuity than they think in terms of current things. Although there are many Endowment Fund donors that are quite active and vital. I do think there is more attention being paid to donors wanting to have some say on what

the uses of their money are going to be. So there are more donor designated funds as time goes on.

In addition, while the growth in the Federation annual campaign has not been tremendous, the growth in Jewish philanthropy in the community has been substantial because most all of the agencies are doing their own fundraising. If you took all of the Jewish fundraising, somebody that might previously have given to the Federation might now give directly to an agency where it's more targeted, in their view. I don't think there is a diminution of Jewish philanthropy, there just is a more flattening curve on Federation fundraising, and that's true all over the country.

Glaser: That brings in the question of specified giving. I assume the Federation is against that.

Seiler: No, it's not, specified giving is a big area. What we're talking about is trying to get donors--We need a certain base, obviously, to conduct all the things that we do, and we give to sixty or eighty different agencies and organizations. We don't want to have somebody come along and say, "I'm going to give you X dollars, but I don't want it available to everybody, I just want it go to this or that organization." But, what we think we're going to have in the future is designated giving in the annual campaign. Hopefully, it will be out of "plus giving" so we don't destroy the foundation of what we're doing, but it's becoming a factor.

X OTHER INVOLVEMENTS

Council of Jewish Federations

General Assembly

Glaser: I wanted to ask you about you positions with other organizations. The first one is the Council of Jewish Federations. When you were president, they had their General Assembly here in San Francisco, and then in 1994 you headed the General Assembly in Denver. Talk about your involvement with the General Assembly.

Seiler: The General Assembly is a coming together of all the federations, the approximately two hundred federations in the country. It's a once-a-year assembly. They move it around the country to different places. As you said, we had it in San Francisco in 1990. They asked me to be a co-chairman; Linda Weinstein from Rochester was my co-chairperson.

As with most things, the CJF staff in New York does most of the leg work, but we had a number of meetings. The CJF has quarterly meetings as well as the General Assembly. The executive committee of CJF, in addition to quarterly meetings, has another a meeting or two during the year. So the year before the General Assembly in Denver, we had a committee, and we worked with the staff person at the CJF in terms of formulating what the contents of the General Assembly should be. As you can imagine, since you have it every year, it pretty much stays the same in terms of format, although we made some changes, and they're looking to make more changes.

Basically, it takes place during most of a week. You have the major meetings on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday of the week. Wednesday night and Thursday night being the plenary sessions where you have major speakers. This last year in Denver we had

Prime Minister Rabin, we had Vice President Gore, we also had other speakers at other times. We had Edgar Bronfman as a speaker at one of the meetings. He was the keynote speaker having to do with Jewish youth and activities relative to that. We have the meetings, and we plan, and then we have the General Assembly. The co-chairman at the General Assembly is the master of ceremonies for the meeting, as so forth, and that's what it is.

Emigré Loan Guarantee

Glaser: You are a member of the national program for guaranteeing loans to emigrés going to Israel sponsored by the Council of Jewish Federations.

Seiler: In either 1990 or 1991 there was a very substantial exodus of people from the then-Soviet Union to Israel. Before that, when there were some people coming out, the Jewish agency had a basket of benefits that they would give these new emigrés. Included in the basket was a certain amount of money to get them started, which might have been a thousand dollars or twelve hundred dollars a person.

When the amount of emigration increased so substantially, there was not enough money to continue to just give all these people this money. So, what was worked out was a loan program, where the emigré could apply for a loan from a bank in Israel, and the bank had set up a total loan amount.

The loans were guaranteed by the Council of Jewish Federations, who in turn had each of the federations in the United States and Canada and Europe guarantee the CJF. CJF doesn't have any money, it's the federations. It was a loan guarantee program administered by the Council of Jewish Federations and by the United Israel Appeal.

This was during my presidency. As you can imagine, nobody knew how many people were going to come out of Russia, but a half a million did come out, or 600,000. But if the expected number of people came out, you were talking about \$900 million worth of loans plus accrued interest, because the emigré had no payments to make at all for three years, and then from the years three through ten would have to pay principal and interest back to the banks. So the amount was really very, very large. It could amount to, let's say, a billion and a half dollars or thereabouts. Each federation agreed to take its proportionate share of its guarantee. Our community's portion was approximately \$20 million.

We didn't expect and don't expect that we would have to pay back the loans, but we have this guarantee. During the time I was president, this issue came up, and it was a very significant issue because the board was committing our federation to a potential liability of some \$20 million.

At the same time, the UIA created a committee of about seven or eight people nationally, to be what they call the loan guarantee oversight committee, which was to oversee how the program worked, to be sure that the banks acted in accordance with what they had agreed to, to be sure that the money went to the right place, to be sure that there were audits of the money, and to be sure that the program was legitimate. I was asked to be a member of that committee, and I was and still am a member of that committee.

Additionally, the Council of Jewish Federations has a loan guarantee committee for its part in this program, and I'm on that committee as well. We meet quarterly; we just met two weeks ago in Chicago at an executive committee meeting and discussed this, and we meet quarterly also to oversee.

Those two committees are not two committees doing the same thing. One, the UIA committee is more of the technical aspects of how the money is being administered. The CJF committee is more of the overall program and what should be done with it. I happen to be on both committees.

It's interesting, the number of people who came out of the Soviet Union was very large, but it was not as large as it might otherwise have been when the whole program was set up, and right now it's not very large. Maybe 20 or 30 or 35 percent of the loans we anticipated have been made. So you can see that the amount of the guarantees is not as significant, because the amount of loans is not as significant, but it's still a significant amount.

Board Membership

Glaser: In addition to being on the loan guarantee committee for the CJF, you're on the board.

Seiler: I'm on the board, I'm on the executive committee, I'm on the finance committee, I'm involved with their endowment program.

Glaser: You must have to do a lot of traveling for--

Seiler: Well, no, they have their quarterly meetings where most of the business is done. Plus fax, you know, is a wonderful thing. You can accomplish an awful lot by fax or telephone. It's not heavy-- I mean most of the work is done by staff. And yet when I go to a quarterly meeting there are a number of meetings that take place. It's interesting, and the people are nice people, and you meet nice people.

Glaser: You are also on the board of trustees of the United Jewish Appeal?

Seiler: I think they are two-year terms, I was on for four years, and that's a rotating thing. I was on the board of trustees of that, but I'm much more involved in the CJF than I've ever been on UJA board.

Glaser: What were your responsibilities for the UJA board?

Seiler: Nothing in particular, just a member of the board. There were maybe thirty or forty people on that board. And part of that is geographical representation. The responsibilities on the UJA were primarily just to go to the meetings, or at least be available by telephone or conference call. I really didn't have any active participation in any committees. I was on one or two committees, but nothing of many major consequence.

Glaser: Does the board set policy?

Seiler: Yes, like any other board does.

National Funding Council

Glaser: The CJF made a change from the Large Communities Budgeting Conference to the National Funding Council. What was that all about?

Seiler: In the federation allocation process, you've got local agencies, national agencies, overseas agencies, and other things. For example, to make an evaluation of the Jewish Home for the Aged (I'm now speaking of our local budgeting or allocations committee), or any of our local agencies, while it's not easy we're familiar with it and it's here and so forth.

To make an evaluation of the American Jewish Congress or the Anti-Defamation League or other national agencies is very difficult for a local community to do. You really don't know as much about it as you would know about the local agencies. In

addition, about these national agencies, one city might look at it one way, another city might look at it a different way. So some years ago they formed the LCBC, which took originally maybe six or so agencies. They said we're going to have this organization and we're going to decide on the funding for an agency as a group. Then each city would take a proportionate share of that, as opposed to each city making its own decision. Once you join the LCBC, you went along with whatever they decided, and our Federation had representation on the LCBC.

The National Funding Council, and I'm not sure that that's the right title. Perhaps you're right, I just don't know. It's now being expanded to where it's not only large city budgeting, but more cities are included, more agencies are being covered, more national agencies. It might have been that only four of them were in the original one, not six, I'm not sure. It's been expanded but the theory is the same.

Glaser: Originally there were sixteen federations that made up LCBC.

Seiler: Yes. There was a group called the Big Sixteen originally. Then it went to the Big Nineteen and then Big Eighteen. I'm not sure where the line is.

Professional Societies

Glaser: You are a member of the California Society of Certified Public Accountants, and they gave you their annual service award.

Seiler: I'm a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the California Society of Certified Public Accountants. The California Society of Certified Public Accountants, which covers obviously, as it sounds, all CPAs in the state of California. They have two awards per year, every year. One person is given an award for community service, and one award is for professional service. In other words, the second one is for people that do things within the organization. What they do is they have nominations every year for the community service award, which is supposedly the person in the profession that has done the most for community service in the state of California. Somebody nominated me, and I got the award four or five years ago, I guess.

Glaser: I don't have the date.

Seiler: Yes, it was in 1989. It's a very prestigious award, and it's an award I'm very proud of. You know, it's from your peers, and we have I don't know how many CPAs in California, maybe 50,000. You go to the annual meeting, and you make a presentation, and you make a speech, and you get a nice plaque, and I was very pleased about that.

Glaser: How active are you in the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants?

Seiler: I personally really don't participate actively. I go to some of their educational sessions, but I'm not very active. Our firm, however, is quite active.

Jewish Home for the Aged

Glaser: Among local organizations, you were the vice president of the Jewish Home for the Aged.

Seiler: Yes, that was the highest position that I had at the Home, and in fact, I was scheduled to be president. At the same period of time that I was scheduled to be president, which is a two year term, I was asked to become president of the Federation. I had to make a choice, and I decided that I would choose the president of the Federation. It was a very difficult decision because I've been on a lot of boards of agencies and things, and probably the Jewish Home is the closest to my heart. I really had a tough decision because I really wanted to be president of the Jewish Home. I probably could have gone back into line, but that would have then discommoded a lot of people who were behind me, so I didn't do it. But I felt badly about it because it's a wonderful organization.

Bureau of Jewish Education

Glaser: Then you were a board member for the Bureau of Jewish Education?

Seiler: Yes. Some years ago and with nothing special there. I was a board member, I attended meetings, and I was on couple of committees. But that must be fifteen or twenty years ago.

Glaser: Was that during a period of time when they had trouble with their executive?

Seiler: No, no. In fact, when the problems with the executive arose, I was president of the Federation. I was involved in that in terms of trying to moderate it and trying to get it to work out. I went to one of their meetings as a result, together with Wayne Feinstein. The two of us went to one of their meetings and also did certain work behind the scenes to try and help that problem. But my involvement is much earlier as a member of the board.

Glaser: I wonder if that isn't an agency prone to difficulty, because there were other instances in the past when there was a problem with the executive director.

Seiler: I really don't know about that.

Mount Zion Hospital and Medical Center

Glaser: And you were board member of the Mount Zion Hospital and Medical Center?

Seiler: Yes. I was board member of the Mount Zion Hospital for perhaps four years. This was, I don't remember, probably the late 1970s or middle 1970s. It was interesting. It's very difficult for a business person to be on medical board because the business decisions sort of come naturally to you. But there is so much cross-fertilization with the medical part of it.

Stanford University Medical Center

Seiler: I was on the board of Stanford University Medical Center for ten years. I just finished it last December. It and Mount Zion were the two--I had to do more homework on those boards than any other because some of it was foreign to me, you know. I learned at Mount Zion that unless you do your homework you really didn't know what was going on.

State of Israel Bonds

Glaser: We have already talked about the State of Israel Bonds, but you were on the advisory committee. Was that local or national?

Seiler: Local.

Ross Stores

Glaser: Are you still a member of the Ross Stores?

Seiler: Ross Stores board of directors, yes.

Glaser: What do you do as a board member?

Seiler: It's the board of directors of a commercial organization. It's a pretty big company. I'm chairman of the audit committee. There are seven people on the board presently. I've been on the board since we founded the company in 1982, I believe. It's a business board. It's a publicly traded company. It's a different dimensions than the charitable organizations. And I'm on the board of the Mid-Peninsula Bank, which is a publicly owned local bank in the Peninsula area--Palo Alto, San Mateo, Redwood City, and the surrounding areas. I was a founder of that.

Glaser: The Bay Area Advisory Board for the American Foundation of the Blind, since 1986?

Seiler: Yes, I guess. I mean I'm not really very much involved in that. We gave a contribution of some size at one point. They were trying to organize a board, and they asked me to be on it. My wife is as well. But we've never really done anything, except have our name on.

More on Stanford University Medical Center

Glaser: But you're a founder and past chairman of Friends of Cardiovascular Medicine for Stanford University Hospital, 1982 to 1987.

Seiler: Yes. Yes. In 1982, my wife had coronary bypass surgery at a young age. After that was completed, we were grateful to the Stanford people, and we made for us a major contribution to research at Stanford.

After that happened, at the same time they began talking to my wife and to me about establishing a fundraising organization to support cardiovascular research. It was something that we were

very interested in and wanted to do. With the assistance of the chief of cardiology at Stanford and the chief of cardiovascular surgery, who was Norman Shumway, who is rather internationally famous, we founded this organization.

We raised money for cardiovascular research, both in cardiology and in cardiovascular surgery. We built a board, and a membership, and so forth. My wife and I were co-chairpersons of it for five years, at which time we decided it's time for somebody else to be co-chairpersons, and someone else succeeded us. It's still active, and we're still involved on the executive committee.

Stanford, you know, has been a pioneer in heart research and treatment of heart problems, anyway. It's been fascinating and interesting, and the people are just--It's mind-boggling as to what some of the things that are happening.

Glaser: Are there any other organizations that you're a board member of that I have not listed?

Seiler: Did we talk about Congregation Beth Am?

Glaser: Yes.

Seiler: We talked about that. I'm a past president there. I'm still active on a much reduced scale.

Glaser: What is your involvement with the Stanford University Hospital Board?

Seiler: After we formed the Friends of Cardiovascular Medicine, I was asked to be on the board of the Stanford Medical Center, which is a separate organization from Stanford University, although they're obviously very much affiliated. I was a member of that board for about ten years. I was vice-chairman of that board for about the last five of the ten years. The chairman of the board was Donald Kennedy, who was president of Stanford University. It was a pretty significant involvement over the years, not only on the board but on the various committees. Health care has gone through just tremendous changes in the last ten years, so it was a challenging board to be on. And it was an interesting board to be on.

Glaser: Is there some special appeal that health organizations hold for you?

Seiler: Well, I don't know. I guess the appeal they hold is that if you're involved in charitable things the recipients of charitable things are either underprivileged or people that have some

physical impairment. It's an area where I think a lot can be done. The real question on health organizations, which I've never been able to answer, is how much should government be involved, and how much should the private sector be involved? Well, I have a great deal of empathy for people that have physical afflictions, and if we can be helpful, we do. To that extent, I guess, I have an interest in it.

Over the years I've been involved in some middle of the road portion of activity, not major, not minor, in a lot of different organizations. It's so difficult to name them off the top of my head at this point. I think we've covered the major ones.

XI SUMMING UP

Being Jewish

Glaser: Tell me, what difference had it made in your life that you're a Jew?

Seiler: I don't know if it's made any difference. I think that being Jewish probably focuses you more. The fact that you're a minority focuses you more on your circumstances, as compared to being one of the major herd. I mean if you're part of a group that is three percent of the population, or some number like that, or maybe six percent of the population, in that way you feel more focused. Because of the tradition of tzedakah, and because of the feeling that the Jewish people for the most part have for charitable work, I think that it's gotten me to gravitate much more to things that were I Christian maybe that I would not have gotten into.

I think, as a result, that's enriched our lives tremendously. We feel good about ourselves. We can always do better, don't misunderstand me. I really feel that. The old story is that when you go on will you leave anything, will you have improved the world in any way. And I like to think that maybe I have improved it a little bit in some way because of these involvements. I think being Jewish has aided me in doing that because there's a lot of attention paid by Jewish tradition to this kind of thing.

I've never really experienced any discrimination of any consequence that I've known about. I guess there probably has been some. But I really have never had any significant thing happen. Thank goodness I wasn't involved in the Holocaust, but the things that I've seen in pictures, or education, or visiting the camps, or whatever, have made me feel more strongly about the fact I really want to see Judaism persevere and be strong. So to that extent I think it's probably helped me.

I've made a lot of friends as a result of this. As I might have mentioned in an earlier interview, one of the things about charitable work is most of the people in charitable work are nice people. CJF for example, has people from all over the country that I've gotten to know pretty well, and they're all nice people. So that's kind of good. I go to a meeting and I think, "God, I really don't want to go to this meeting." But then I leave the meeting and I think, "Gee, the experience was good." If I could have all of the meetings in San Francisco, it would be even better [chuckle]. I don't really know how to answer that question.

I don't happen to be a terrifically, religiously, observant person. I don't go to temple very much. It was interesting, most of my life I'd go on yahrzeits and maybe on an occasion. When I became active in the temple, I went more. When I became president of the temple, I was there every Friday night and many Saturday mornings for two years. Then I finished being president, and maybe the next year I was there once a month and next year once every two months. Now I'm back to going on yahrzeits and maybe the High Holy Days. I have to tell you, I don't really get a lot out of the prayer books and some of the things that are written in there, so that doesn't inspire me particularly.

Glaser: What has given you the most satisfaction in your many volunteer activities?

Seiler: I think, the most satisfaction is what I just said, that I feel good about my wife's and my participation, both financially and in terms of effort, in helping people. I feel that I've been successful, and in being successful I've given something back. Maybe doing it has made me successful, I don't know--it's a chicken and egg kind of thing. But I think the best thing is that I feel good about our place on earth for that reason, and I think that's really the major thing. Plus the fact I think we've done some good in specific situations as well. It's hard to measure.

Federation Presidency

Glaser: What was the most challenging aspect of your Federation presidency?

Seiler: Well, I think the most challenging was probably selecting a new executive and the transition from Brian Lurie to Wayne Feinstein. Going through that process not to pre-judge it, to try and do a good job, realizing that the selection of the executive could have a major effect on what happens to the Federation for many years,

as you go down the road. That was probably the most challenging one, and I think the whole process took six or eight months out of my two years. Planning it, executing it, trying to keep the other people focused. Because, you know, everybody in a situation like that has got a different point of view, and everybody thinks that they know best. So, kind of managing it was probably the most challenging thing.

Recommended Federation Changes

Glaser: What changes would you like to see in the Federation?

Seiler: I think first of all that the Federation needs to become, to use a current term, more user-friendly. Part of this is Jewish responsibility and Jewish guilt. You go to a place like Stanford University, or the University of California, or some non-Jewish charity, and you make a donation or give them a little help and they really make an effort to make you feel good about what you've done. My old joke is, they put you up on an a chair and carry you around the room for five thousand dollars. Whereas you go to a Jewish organization, and give ten or fifty or a hundred times as much, and it's more that it's your responsibility to do it. You don't get the gratification that you might get from some of these other places. As a result of that, unless you have a very significant feeling for the cause, it's easy for people to say, "Oh, what the devil, I'd just as soon do it where they really appreciate it." The fact is that it is really appreciated in the Jewish community too, but it's not always demonstrated. It really annoys me.

In my business I see an awful lot of wealthy people. I know that the bulk of them don't give anything near what they think they should, much less what I think they should. If we could get a larger percentage to be part of the effort, it would mean there would be more money and more services available. It would mean less pressure on the people that are doing it.

And it's widespread. I mean, people can have all kinds of things, but when it comes to giving some money to charity--. It's not only the Federation, but particularly Jewish charities, they do it out of guilt. I'd like to see that somehow transformed. I don't know that it can be, but I'd like to see it transformed where people get a plus feeling rather than a neutral or negative feeling. That's one thing I would change.

Another thing, I realize the process has to be, but I'd like to see fewer endless meetings. But that's sort of a personal thing. I think, if you really analyze, you've got to have the meetings to involve the people, but they get less effective the longer you go on.

In Jewish life, we've got major problems with intermarriage and with the decline of the perceived position of Israel in terms of need. I think the Federation has to become more aggressive and look and change the way the game is played from their side. You just can't go out and ask for money and get it. You've got to find new ways to convince people that what they're doing is really something that is helping their fellow human beings.

Glaser: What about the future of the Jewish Community Center?

Seiler: You know, the UJCC [United Jewish Community Centers] in San Francisco, or in the area, is now terminated. I think that the JCC has a significant place in the community, not necessarily for me but for a lot of people that need it. I think what you do, when you do charitable things, is you provide a place to participate for those that want to use it and those that need it. And I think the centers have proven in Marin, in Palo Alto, and in Belmont that they do bring Jews together.

They also bring others together. I mean you have a large non-Jewish component; well, so you do. I don't think we have to have it be all Jewish. But I think they provide a significant place. And, because they provide a significant place, I'd like to see them be on a decent financial footing. I think they will survive, and I think we're going to have to put money into them. I think it's important that they survive for the people that need them.

Glaser: Can the San Francisco JCC survive in the California Street building?

Seiler: I'm not an expert on it really, but as I understand it there are significant seismic problems there. So if there are significant seismic problems, and you needed thirty million dollars, let's say (I don't know that that's the right number, but let's assume that), to really get that building up to speed seismically and be modern, and so forth, I think there's a question as to whether you should spend that money in that location. It depends what the alternatives are.

Given the financial problems they've had, and given the fact that in terms of athletic facilities you've now got athletic facilities which are better in an awful lot of places around the

community, the question is are people going to be willing to contribute the amount of money necessary to build this thing. Once they build it, is it going to be needed and functional.

I don't have enough information to know that answer. But I am concerned about it because I'd hate to see us take that amount of money, or more, and pour it into something that is not really cost-effective or really in the right place. I think the people are going to have to examine that. But I do think that we need a Center, and we'll have to find a way to do it.

Glaser: But if it were modernized and brought up to earthquake code, wouldn't it have to shut down for a number of years anyway?

Seiler: I guess. But so long as you don't have the athletic facilities there, you could probably make due with some temporary arrangement to solve the facilities problem. It might not be as good, but I don't think abandoning it would be very good. I think it's important we have it. It's like Jewish education, particularly the day schools. I don't happen to be a believer in day school for my family. I would rather have my children or grandchildren go to public, or if it were private, to non-sectarian schools. But there is an element of the community that wants to have that, and I think if they want to have it, they should have it. And everything doesn't have to be decided on whether it's cost-effective.

Glaser: Is there anything you'd like to add? We've come to the end of my questions.

Seiler: In the work that I've done and the involvements I've had, and I've said this throughout the interviews, I've enjoyed it. I think it's enriched my life, and I like the action, you might say.

Somebody who's willing to give of themselves in terms of effort, and give something of their assets, can go a long way in any one of these organizations, whether it's the Federation, or an agency, or what have you. The ones that don't do it really don't know what they're missing. But I don't think they get the good feeling and gratification. There's no free lunches, as the saying goes.

It's aggravating many times. When I was president of the Federation and I'd have a board meeting, some people would stand up and say something that I thought was off the wall, when they hadn't done their homework, I would get aggravated. But, you know, that's sort of their compensation for being there in the first place. There are a lot of other people out there who aren't there. So I just think that it's a good thing. I believe that

people should be involved in this kind of thing. They don't have to be involved in my thing, but they should be involved in something. The problem is most people are too selfish. And the ones that are involved in this seem to be, for the most part, happier in their lives. Now, maybe that's a generalization that I can't prove, but that's kind of how I feel.

Glaser: Thank you Mr. Seiler, I've enjoyed talking with you.

Seiler: Oh, I have too.

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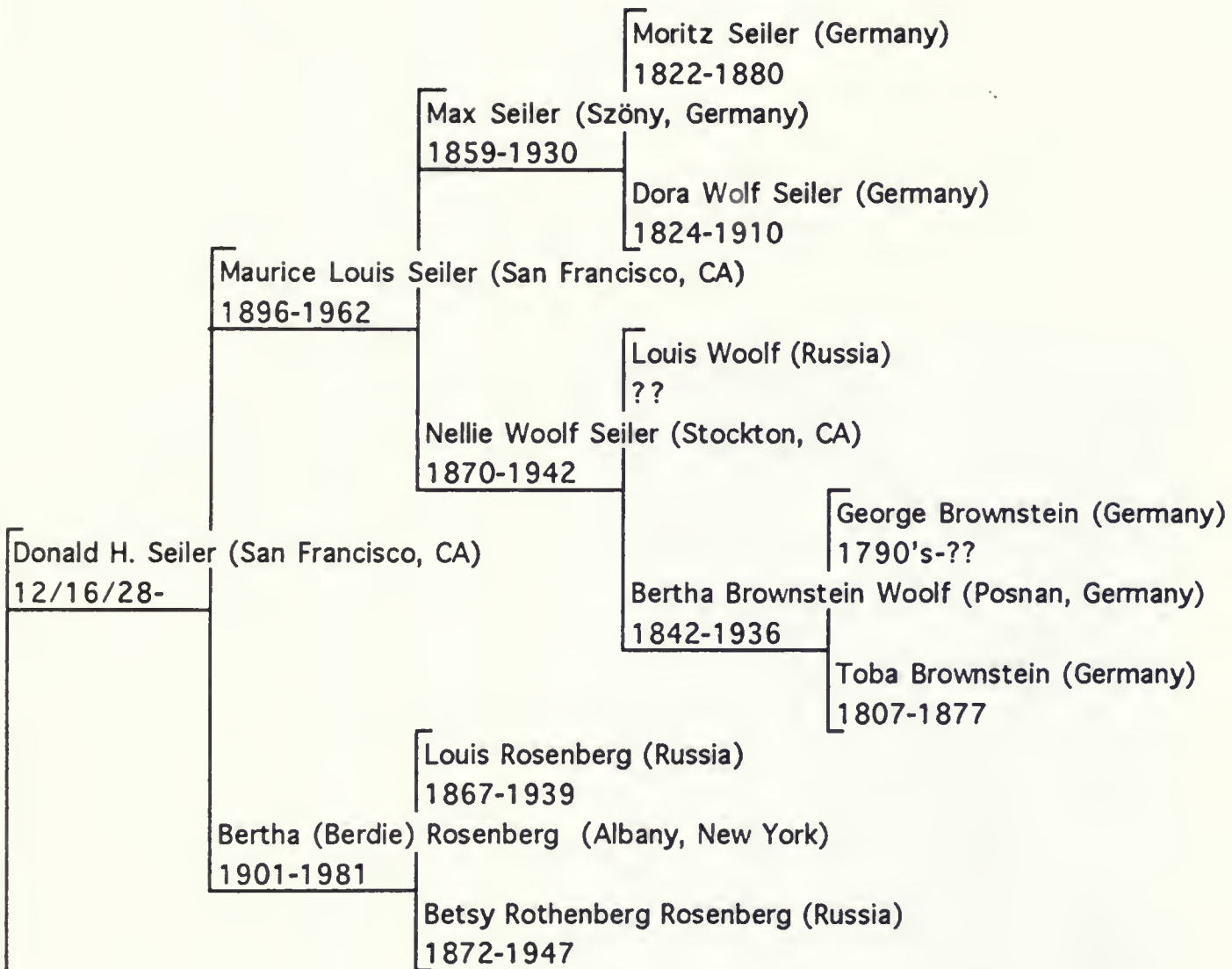
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Partial Seiler family tree



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Seiler Honored at Annual Meeting



Outgoing JCF President Don Seiler addresses a packed house at the JCF Annual Meeting.

Don Seiler was the right man at the right time, just the leader needed for a period of internal and external change," former Federation president Richard Goldman said, introducing outgoing president Seiler at the 82nd Annual Meeting of the JCF, Wednesday, June 10, at Congregation Emanu-el. "He was a catalyst in the loan guarantee program for Soviet immigrants to Israel," according to Goldman, who also cited Seiler's role in the growth of the Endowment Fund, and his guidance during the transition in professional leadership of the Federation.

"This is an outstanding organization and I am thrilled to be part of it," Seiler said. Seiler, thanking many in attendance, cited the achievements of his campaign chairmen, John Friedenrich, 1990, and John Goldman, 1991. Campaign contributions went up in both years despite the recession and the demands of the successful Operation Exodus operations. Campaigns



Don Seiler with Precious Legacy seder plate, presented by former JCF president Richard Goldman on behalf of the Federation.

in many other Jewish communities showed decreases during this period.

As a token of the community's appreciation, Seiler received a seder plate from the Precious Legacy Collection, objects of Judaica collected in Europe by the Nazis and stored until now in Czechoslovakia.

Cissie Swig Installed as JCF President



Incoming president, Roselyne C. (Cissie) Swig receives the gavel from Don Seiler.

Seiler welcomed incoming president, Roselyne C. (Cissie) Swig. "I've known Cissie and worked with her for many years," Seiler said in an interview. "She is one of the most creative and dedicated people I know. She enjoys a challenge, she loves to work with people, and I know she'll do a great job."

In her remarks, Swig talked of taking up the "mantle of concern and action," reaching out to new young leadership from all segments of the community, and encouraged everyone to take a more active part in the American political process. ■

War, economy, olim topped outgoing JCF chief's agenda

By MICHAEL WELCH

Special to the Bulletin

"When I took this job two years ago, I thought I had it all figured out," says Don Seiler, outgoing president of the S.F.-based Jewish Community Federation.

"I thought I knew how much time everything would take and so on," he admits, laughing. "But even after 30 years of federation involvement, I had no idea how many facets of federation activity there are, how big the playing field is and how fast the rules can change."

Seiler handed over the JCF gavel to Incoming president Roslyn Cissie Swig at the federation's annual meeting Wednesday at Temple Emanu-El.

Although he began his term with an ambitious set of goals, events on the local and international scenes soon challenged Seiler to cover a lot of uncharted ground in a hurry.

For example, he had to move quickly in fall 1990 when he learned that Rabbi Brian Lurie, the JCF's veteran executive director, soon would be moving on. Seiler formed an executive search committee, guided the committee in its selection of Wayne Feinstein as the JCF's new executive vice president, and facilitated a smooth transition from Lurie to Feinstein before a year had passed.

Another unexpected challenge followed the JCF's 1990 announcement of Northern Califor-

nia's first mega-mission to Israel. By the end of the year war loomed over the Middle East.

The federation, however, steadfastly held to its plans, and the following April "Shalom '91," chaired by Cissie and Dick Swig, was the first large group — nearly 340 strong — to visit Israel after the gulf war.

Topping the list of unanticipated challenges, Seiler recalls: "When Operation Exodus was launched, our goal was to bring 210,000 Soviet Jews to Israel over a three-year period. Two years later, nearly 400,000 immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia are being resettled in Israel, and an additional 90,000 Soviet Jews have come to the U.S."

Seiler praises donors who rose to the challenge of Operation Exodus as well as pressing local needs.

"In 1991, with the leadership of campaign chair John Goldman, we transmitted \$15 million in cash to UJA, chiefly through Operation Exodus, for Israel's new immigrants," Seiler says, "while



Don Seiler

at the same time we raised nearly \$18 million through our annual campaign and increased allocations to our local allocations by more than \$500,000."

This year, with John Freidenrich as chair, the JCF is having one of the most successful campaigns in the country — despite the recession — and hopes to see an additional \$300,000 allocated

to local agencies.

"There are those who feel that we should be raising more funds for our local agencies," Seiler concedes, "and I couldn't agree more. If we can get the message out explaining how many Jews there are living in the Tenderloin, how many of our elderly lack adequate housing, how many Jews are out of work, I think our donors will respond generously."

"Jewish philanthropy is increasing," he adds, "but federation giving is just part of the larger picture. We need to be certain donors continue to make it a central part."

Another part of federation giving is endowment. The JCF's Endowment Fund has grown by \$20 million during the past two years, under chair Merv Morris, and has made nearly \$25 million in allocations to local and overseas beneficiaries.

Aside from fund raising, Seiler's original goals included improving federation-agency relationships and broadening the JCF's leadership base.

"We're working hard on our relationships with our agencies," he observes. "Rather than the federation acting as givers and the agencies as receivers, we are sitting down as partners now and working together on problems, such as the recession and decreasing government funding, which affect the community at large."

Says Feinstein: "As our local community grows even stronger over the coming years, it will be because Don Seiler helped lay a solid foundation."

And what are Seiler's greatest satisfactions as he looks back over the past two years?

"Almost everyone in the community whom I asked to do something agreed," he answers. "I'd like to think it was because of me, but really it's because of them...because of their commitment and their willingness to get involved."

"Of course," Seiler says, "the people I am most grateful to are my wife Ruth and the rest of my family."

connections

4

JEWISH COMMUNITY ENDOWMENT FUND

Mazel Tov, Don, On Your National Endowment Award

The President of the S.F.-based Jewish Community Federation, Donald H. Seiler, has been honored by the New York-based Council of Jewish Federations (CJF) with a special Endowment Achievement Award.

The CJF citation reads in part as follows: "Donald H. Seiler was the Immediate Past President of the Jewish Community Endowment Fund. He has also



served as the Endowment Allocations Chairman and continues to serve on the Endowment Fund Special Development Committee. Under his leadership, the Endowment Fund has grown significantly and made, in turn, significant grants to the Jewish community. His expertise as a leading tax professional has also served to guide the Federation's Endowment Fund Committee." ■

▼ In the above picture, Don Seiler is handed his award by Endowment Chairman, Mervin Morris.

Traditions

Jewish Community Endowment Fund

Jewish Community Federation

October 1991



On Wednesday, October 23, the Jewish Community Endowment Fund (JCEF) will be paying special tribute to Donald H. Seiler.

The reason for this formal recognition is probably best

summed up by one of the JCEF's ads which proclaimed that Seiler is one of the "toughest, most generous guys in town."

As managing partner of Seiler & Company, one of the Bay area's leading accounting firms,

JCEF SALUTES ONE OF THE TOUGHEST, MOST GENEROUS GUYS IN TOWN

Seiler's tough on bad tax planning—and generous about the JCEF. As Jewish Community Federation president, he's outspoken in his view that every Jew ought to try to help those who depend on the JCF — and generous with his own resources doing just that. And, as a Jew, he believes firmly that every individual should give something back to his or her community — and the record shows he's more than generous on this score . . .

Seiler's been involved with the community in countless ways, from JCF Capital Funds Committee Chair and Campaign Chair (1975-76) to his present position as JCF President. He's also been active with other agencies, including the Jewish Home for the Aged, State of Israel Bonds and Peninsula Congregation Beth Am. During the Eighties, he threw his prodigious energies

into the Endowment Fund, serving as Fund Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Allocations Committee and a member of the Development Special Committee. From 1988-1990, he was Chairman of the Endowment Fund.

"The Fund has grown significantly," says Seiler, who has a Philanthropic Fund and an Israel Investment Bond Fund. "We're now a nationally recognized leader. I'm glad that, during my years as chairman, I played, with others, a role in the exceptional additions to the fund for community emergencies and seed . . ."

He points with pride to JCEF growth. In January 1980, JCEF assets (excluding the market value of real estate and other non-cash assets) stood at \$16,987,000. At the end of June 1991, the number had climbed to \$80,066,200, with another \$6,000,000 in

Supporting Foundation assets. From 1980-1990, the JCEF granted a total of \$69,736,344 to local, national and overseas communities.

"But it's not just the numbers that tell the story," says Seiler. "What I remember best is the interaction with all the people who are building the future in this community. And I foresee that the JCEF's future will be one of significant growth. There's a powerful recognition that we need to build into the future."

And what are his tips when it comes to giving vehicles? "Short-term," says the generous accountant whose tips are tough to beat, "I'd say a Philanthropic Fund. Longer-term, Charitable Remainder Trusts, Charitable Lead Trusts, and Supporting and Private Foundations." ♦

REMARKS AT JEWISH COMMUNITY ENDOWMENT FUND
FUNCTION

OCTOBER 23, 1991

Honoring Mr. Donald H. Seiler

by Rhoda H. Goldman

Don is a star!

Our six-pointed, Jewish star!

You can be sure he's had plenty of training for the position he now holds--and which he executes so superbly, that of President of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, and Sonoma counties. He's been South Peninsula Campaign Chair, Federation Campaign Chair, Federation Vice President, Jewish Community Endowment Fund Capital Funds Committee Chairman, and just previous to his presidency Endowment Fund chair from 1988-1990.

Other points of his star are his involvement with various Jewish organizations, the Jewish Home for the Aged, State of Israel Bonds, Congregation Beth Am, to mention a few.

A CPA by vocation, Don heads his own firm, Seiler & Co., and is active in a number of organizations in his field.

Donald serves on the Stanford University Hospital Board of Directors, and is a founder and past chairman of Friends of Cardiovascular Medicine at Stanford University.

He sparkles when he speaks of the Jewish Community Endowment Fund. To quote Don: "The Eighties were years of significant growth for the Fund. We've now become one of the nationally recognized leaders." In January 1980, Endowment Funds assets stood at \$16,987,000. As you have heard, the funds will exceed \$90,000,000 at the end of this year. Don played a pivotal role during his years as Chairman.

We do know that it's not "all work and no play" for our man of the hour. Competitive tennis with friends, and no, those aren't mutually exclusive, occupy weekend mornings. And the beach at Mauna Kea enjoys his presence a minimum of three times each year.

But the brightest point of his star is as "Boppy" to his four grandchildren, father to Carol and Doug Roberts, and Richard and Susie Seiler and husband to Ruthie. To shed their light on this subject, Ruthie, Carol and Rich will say a few words.

Donald, you are a wise confidant, and a treasured friend. You are our shining star--keep leading us.



JEWISH COMMUNITY FEDERATION

of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties

DONALD H. SEILER -bio-

Donald Seiler is in his second year as president of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties.

Mr. Seiler presided over an eventful first year in office highlighted by the hosting of the Council of Jewish Federation's General Assembly; Shalom '91, the largest ever California mission to Israel; and the selection of the new federation executive vice president. In addition, the War in the Gulf, the airlift of 14,200 Ethiopian Jews to Israel, the escalation of Soviet Jewish emigration to Israel, and a downturn in the economy each impacted the Federation and its fundraising.

Before assuming the presidency, Mr. Seiler served in a variety of positions with the Federation and, with just a few gaps, has been a member of the Board since the early '70s. He served as campaign chairman in 1975-6, several stints as vice president, and headed the Federation's Endowment Fund Committee for two years.

He has also been involved with other Jewish agencies including Jewish Home for the Aged (vice president), State of Israel Bonds, Mount Zion Hospital, United Jewish Community Centers, and the Bureau of Jewish Education. He served as president of Congregation Beth Am.

He is currently a member of the national Board of Trustees of United Jewish Appeal and the national board of the Council of Jewish Federations.

A CPA who heads his own firm, Seiler & Company, Mr. Seiler is involved in a number of organizations in his field. In addition, he is founder and past chairman of Friends of Cardiovascular Medicine at Stanford University Hospital and currently serves on the hospital's Board of Directors.

Mr. Seiler and his wife Ruth live in Atherton.

9/91

JUNE 15, 1990

THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA JEWISH BULLETIN

JCF head tackles 2 drives at once

Don Seiler is going to be extremely busy during the next two years — juggling two major fund-raising campaigns at once.

Yesterday, the managing partner of Seiler & Co., the largest locally based CPA firm in the Bay Area, became the latest president of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties, at its 80th annual meeting.

He takes the helm at a time when the JCF is running two major, parallel drives: its annual fund-raising effort, and Operation Exodus, the campaign to fund Soviet Jewish emigration and resettlement in Israel and in the Bay Area.

How will he — how will the federation — cope with juggling both?

Seiler's answer is, like the man himself, serious and determined:

"I don't know how we're not going to do it," he says.

"I don't have a better mouse-trap," he continues, carefully considering the question, as is clearly his style. "But we have to rise to the challenge, and it's going to be tough. What I can say at this point is that we need to get more and more local Jews involved, and stimulate them to

(See NEW, Page 31)

(Continued from Page 1)

participate in the community in all ways, including financially."

Operation Exodus is an opportunity to get Jews out of the Soviet Union, the San Francisco native says, and there's no question about its primacy.

At the same time, "we won't put the local community second," insists Seiler, who received his master's degree in business administration from U.C. Berkeley and has held a plethora of other community posts.

His most recent position, in fact — and the one he called the "most rewarding" — was as chairman of the federation's Jewish Community Endowment Fund.

Regarding the dual campaigns, Seiler says determinedly, "We're going to broaden the base of our effort, we're going to push right across the board for both campaigns, and inculcate a new sense of urgency."

Meanwhile, those who have worked with him — including outgoing JCF president Annette Dobbs and the executive director of the JCEF, Phyllis Cook, — say Seiler is experienced, savvy and fair, and they report that his fiscal skills are eminently suited to the tasks ahead of him.

"Jewish life being what it is, there are a number of loose ends I didn't manage to clear up — but someone like Don is going to take them in his stride," comments Dobbs.

Likely to be of assistance to Seiler in handling the two campaigns is the fact that he is currently co-chairing the JCF's

strategic planning implementation committee, which grew out of the 1986 demographic study of Bay Area Jewish communities.

"You have to move with the times in any operation, business or charitable. You have to change structure to keep up with current thinking," he says.

Seiler, having graduated from Washington High School in the Richmond District and U.C. Berkeley, became involved in community work during the mid-'60s, almost by accident, when the Peninsula Jewish Community Center in Belmont was under construction.

"I made a capital funds contribution of \$500 — more than I ever thought I would," he recalls. As a result, he was asked to serve on the board and solicit other donations.

Involvement at Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills, to which he and his family still belong, followed. A stint as president of the congregation brought him closer to the federation.

"I believed the congregation and the community are intertwined, and so tried to involve the congregation in federation, and vice-versa," he remembers.

Seiler became campaign chairman on the South Peninsula in 1970, a board member of the JCF and then overall chairman of the JCF campaign in 1975-76.

He also has been a member of the federation's board of directors and its executive committee, and chairman of the capital funds committee. While serving in the latter post, in fact, he was instrumental in the merger of Brandeis and Hillel day schools.

Seiler also has been vice president of the Jewish Home for the Aged, has served on the advisory committee of State of Israel Bonds, and has been a board member of United Jewish Community Centers, the Bureau of Jewish Education, Mount Zion Hospital and Medical Center, and the PJCC.

Seiler and his wife Ruth, to whom he's been married for almost 40 years, have one daughter, Carol Roberts, a son, Richard, and three grandchildren.

But Seiler's involvement extends beyond his immediate family and beyond the Jewish community. He and his wife are co-founders of Friends of Cardiovascular Medicine at Stanford, an organization that raises funds for cardiological research and medicine, and he is vice chairman of the board of Stanford Hospital and works for other medical and accounting organizations as well.

He recently was given the annual community service award by the State of California Society of CPAs.

"It was very nice," he noted, honored that he had been acknowledged in that way by his peers.

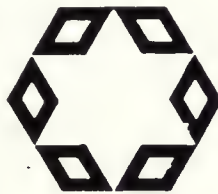
THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA JEWISH BULLETIN

JEWISH
COMMUNITY
FEDERATION

CONNECTIONS

FEBRUARY 10, 1989

Endowment Update



JCEF committees get new leadership

Three veteran Jewish leaders, all of whom have been instrumental in the development of the Jewish Community Federation's Endowment Fund, have been named to head Endowment committees.



Donald Sella

Serving as overall chairman of the Endowment Committee is **Donald H. Sella**, a long-time Jewish community activist whose association with the Federation dates back to 1955. A recognized authority in his field of public accounting, Sella is the managing partner of Sella & Company. His many posts at the JCEF include Federation vice president, board member, campaign chairman and Capital Funds Committee chairman.

"My goal as chairman of the Endowment Committee is to bring the message of the Endowment Fund and philanthropic giving to as many people in the community as is possible," says Sella. According to Sella the greatest advantage of the JCEF is its "sustaining power and the ability to respond to emergency needs."

Sella pointed to the numerous innovative programs and projects that might not have been funded if it were not for the JCEF, including initial costs for the Federation's most recent comprehensive demographic study of Bay Area Jews, the Jewish Community Museum and a new psychiatric ward at the Jewish Home for the Aged.

He says that in the past 5 1/2 years, the Fund's investments have grown from \$27 million to \$56 million — with the addition of more than 182 new philanthropic funds since 1983.

As one of the JCEF's Endowment Fund chairmen, Sella has instituted an Israel Investment Philanthropic Fund, a new option in charitable giving for donors interested in seeing the Federation increase its holdings of Israel Bonds. He was also the new fund's first contributor.

Item 11:

EXECUTIVE SEARCH COMMITTEE
(in place as of 9/18/90)

Chairman: Donald Seiler

Members: Rabbi Michael Barenbaum
Annette Dobbs
Donald Friend
Richard Goldman
Peter Haas
Barbara Isackson
Joelle Steefel
Mel Swig
Roselyne Swig

Item 12:

IMPLEMENTATION SUBCOMMITTEE
(in place -- as of 9/18/90)

Chair: Annette Dobbs

Vice-Chair: Susan Folkman

Staff: Brian Lurie
Nina Bruder

Members: Adele Corvin
Stewart Foreman
John Friedenrich
Bob Friend
Sanford Gallanter
Douglas Heller
Barbara Isackson
Sonya Kaplan
Al Levitt
Bob Lipman
Susan Lowenberg
Larry Myers
Sora Lei Newman

Debra Pell
Alan Rosen
Richard Rosenberg
Dr. Andrew Rosenblatt
Rabbi Peter Rubinstein
George Saxe
Albert L. Schultz
Stuart Seiler
Joelle Spitzer-Steefel
Donald Sweet
Roselyne C. Swig
Ronald C. Wornick
Dr. Harold Zlot

Item 11:

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE
(in formation as of 9/18/89)

NOTE: For this committee only, the following key applies:
+ Notes Federation Past Presidents

Chairman: Don Seiler

Vice Chairman: Melvin Swig⁺, Development
Peter Sloss, Allocations

Staff: Phyllis Cook
Dan Asher

Members:

James Abrahamson
Ben Baum
Rabbi M. Barenbaum
Ernest Benesch
Harry Blumenthal
John Blumlein
Joseph Blumlein
Jerome Braun +
Adele Corvin
Jesse Feldman +
Hanna Fromm
Bud Gansel
Richard Goldman +
Frances Green +
Peter Haas +
Douglas Heller
Geoffrey Kalmanson
Ron Kaufman +
Samuel Ladar +
Robert Levinson

Alvin Levitt
William Lowenberg +
Bruce Mann
Phyllis Moldaw
Laurence Myers +
Bernard Osher
Eda Pell
William Rollnick
George Saxe
Jack Schafer
Albert Schultz
William Russell-Shapiro
Geraldyn Sicular
Robert Sinton +
John Steinhart +
Melvin Swig +
L. Jay Tenenbaum
Haskell Titchell
Sidney Unobskey
Anita Weissberg

Ex-Officio:

Stewart Foreman
Claude Rosenberg

December 15, 1988

ACTION:

- F. It was moved, seconded and passed to appoint the following individuals to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee on "Who Is A Jew":

Melvin Swig; Ad Hoc Chair, Endowment Vice Chair
 Max Bernstein; Project Renewal Chair
 Jerome Braun; Past President
 Annette Dobbs; Ex-Officio
 Dianne Feinstein; Delegate
 Jesse Feldman; Past President
 George Foos; Current Camp Chair
 Stewart Foreman; B & A Chair
 Sam Gill; Project Renewal Vice Chair
 Richard N. Goldman; Past President
 Frances D. Green; Past President
 Peter E. Haas; Past President
 Ron Kaufman; Past President, Overseas Chair
 Robert Kirschner; Delegate
 Samuel A. Ladar; Past President
 Alvin Levitt; Overseas Vice Chair
 William J. Lowenberg; Past President
 Laurence E. Myers; Past President
 Sora Lei Newman; BJE Chair
 Dr. Andrew Rosenblatt; B & A Vice Chair
 George Saxe; Strategic Vice Chair
 Donald Seiler; Endowment Chair
 Robert E. Sinton; Past President
 Peter F. Sloss; Endowment Vice
 Rabbi Malcolm Sparer; Board Of Rabbis
 Ronald Wornick; Strategic Planning Chair

IX Executive Committee Report

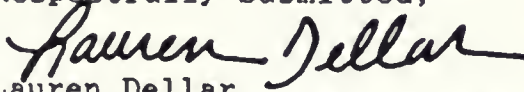
- A. Stuart Seiler delivered the December 6 Executive Committee report making specific mention of the Soviet emigre resettlement status. There was also an update made on the Marin Campus project and the South Peninsula Council.

X Overseas Committee Report

- A. Due to time constraints, it was agreed to postpone the Overseas Committee report until the January 17 Board of Director's Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,


 Lauren Dellar

Assistant to the Executive Director

JEWISH COMMUNITY FEDERATION COMMITTEES*

(Some Committees are in Formation)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (as of 8/19/86)

(Proposed officers nominated by Board Officers Nominating Committee a June 18, 1986.) No other slate was nominated. Elections will take place at the first board meeting after the annual meeting which was held June 17, 1986.

Composition of the Executive Committee is mandated by the Federation Bylaws, Section IV, B., 1.

Chairman: President, Laurence Myers

Staff: Brian Lurie

Members: Judith Chapman, President, Women's Division
 Kenneth Colvin, Vice President
 Adele Corvin, Chairman, Capital Funds Committee
 Annette Dobbs, Chairman, Personnel Committee
 Rhoda Goldman, Chairman, Endowment Committee
 Barbara Isackson, Assistant Treasurer
 Geoffrey Kalmanson, Secretary
 Ron Kaufman, Immediate Past-President
 Dr. Donald Linker, Chairman, Fundraising Committee
 Dr. Donald Newman, Chairman, 1986 Campaign
 Raquel Newman, Vice President
 Claude Rosenberg, Chairman, Investment Committee
 Albert Schultz, Treasurer
 Donald Seiler, Vice President
 Stuart Seiler, Chairman, 1987 Campaign
 Roselyne Swig, Vice President
 Melvin Wasserman, Chairman, Planning & Budgeting
 Committee
 Ronald Wornick, Vice President

Guests: Ronald Berman, Chairman, Communications Committee
 Richard Goldman, Chairman, Overseas Committee
 George Saxe, Chairman, Demographic Study Committee

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman: Albert Schultz
 Vice Chairman: Annette Dobbs (Personnel)
 Staff: Nancy Hair

Members: Barbara Isackson Michael Podell (Building)
 Adriana Ryan Dr. Andrew Rosenblatt
 George Saxe

Ex-Officio: Laurence Myers

Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Board of Directors approved the following appointments made by the President for membership on the following Federation Committees:

SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEECHAIRMAN: Mrs. William H. GreenVICE-CHAIRMAN: Reynold H. Col

James Abrahamson
Mrs. John C. Altman
Alan D. Becker
John L. Blumlein
Paul E. Boas
Mrs. John Bransten
Louis L. Brounstein
Dr. Arthur Z. Cerf
Stanley Claster
Harry Cohn
Mrs. David Z. Cook
Mrs. Harold S. Dobbs
Mrs. A. Aaron Elkind
David Epstein
Stuart Erlanger
Mrs. Jack S. Euphrat
Mortimer Fleishhacker III
Howard Fleishman
George Frankenstein
Darrell Friedman

Mrs. Stanley M. Friedman
Mrs. Eugene L. Friend
Mrs. Hugo Friend, Jr.
Mrs. Theodore Geballe
Daniel T. Goldberg
Mrs. Richard N. Goldman
James A. Goldsmith, Jr.
Ron Goodman
Morgan A. Gunst, Jr.
Donald H. Kahn
Ron Kaufman
Miss Teddi Kern
Allen E. Kline
Robert J. Koshland
Marshall H. Kuhn
Robert M. Levison, Jr.
Mrs. Richard N. Levy
William J. Lowenberg
Gerald D. Marcus
Mrs. Robert A. Mendle

Rabbi Herbert Mor
Irving Rabin
Mrs. Irving Reid
Dr. Ernest S. Ro
Dr. Milton Rosen
Sidney Rudy
Lloyd R. Sankov
Theodore R. Seto
Donald H. Seiler
David A. Silver
Edgar Sinton
Mrs. Robert E. S
Peter F. Sloss
Dr. Bertram Solo
Mrs. Elliot Stei
Dr. Jerry Westli
Larry Wolf
Herbert Yanowitz
Norman A. Zilber
Dr. Harold S. Zla

BUDGET COMMITTEECHAIRMAN: Jerome I. BraunVICE-CHAIRMAN: Henry E. Bern

Lowell Adelson
Rabbi Joseph Asher
Martin Aufhauser
Gerson Bakar
Mrs. Franklin M. Battat
Alan D. Becker
Dr. Abraham Bernstein
Richard Bernstein
Richard C. Blum
Morris D. Bobrow
Dr. William S. Breall
Milton Bronstein
Charles Chaban
Harold S. Chapman
Ben K. Cherin
Jack Clumeck, Jr.
Kenneth Colvin
Jay A. Darwin
John W. Davis
Dr. Julian S. Davis
Philip Diller
Harold S. Dobbs
Dr. Richard H. Dorsay
Jack S. Euphrat
Samuel L. Fendel
Marvin C. Frank

Thomas L. Frankel
Dr. M. Wallace Friedman
Stanley M. Friedman
Alan Gilbert
Herbert A. Ginsberg
Adm. Herschel Goldberg
Burton J. Goldstein
Dr. Robert Gordon
Mrs. Gilbert Gradinger
Mrs. Jay P. Hammerslag, Jr.
Maurice A. Harband
Michael Harris
Eric Hart
Douglas M. Heller
Wayne S. Hertzka
Morris Horwitz
Samuel I. Jacobs
Gerardo Joffe
Harold J. Kaufman
Lee S. Krieger
Roland Lampert
Herman Landson

Herbert A. Leland
Ben K. Lefer
Robert B. Levitas
William L. Lowe

Stuart G. Moldaw
Mrs. Frank M. Mon
Laurence E. Myer
Gary S. Nachman
Allan Orwitz
Bernard Osher
Dr. Milton J. Pe
Henry Robinson
Dr. Samuel I. Rol
Kenneth Rosenberg
Herbert I. Ross
William Rubin
Mrs. Madeleine
Dr. David D. S
Dr. Robert Sach
George B. Saxe
Dr. Abraham Sirb
Joseph Sloss, Jr.
Stanton L. Sobel
Mrs. Goodwin Ste
Paul Steiner
Mrs. Richard L. S
Rabbi Jacob Trau
Murray H. Warsh
Henry B. Weil

Item 11:

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE
(in formation as of 9/18/89)

NOTE: For this committee only, the following key applies:

+ Notes Federation Past Presidents

Chairman: Don Seiler

Vice Chairman: Melvin Swig+, Development
Peter Sloss, Allocations

Staff: Phyllis Cook
Dan Asher

Members:	James Abrahamson	Alvin Levitt
	Ben Baum	William Lowenberg +
	Rabbi M. Barenbaum	Bruce Mann
	Ernest Benesch	Phyllis Moldaw
	Harry Blumenthal	Laurence Myers +
	John Blumlein	Bernard Osher
	Joseph Blumlein	Eda Pell
	Jerome Braun +	William Rollnick
	Adele Corvin	George Saxe
	Jesse Feldman +	Jack Schafer
	Hanna Fromm	Albert Schultz
	Bud Gansel	William Russell-Shapiro
	Richard Goldman +	Geraldyn Sicular
	Frances Green +	Robert Sinton +
	Peter Haas +	John Steinhart +
	Douglas Heller	Melvin Swig +
	Geoffrey Kalmanson	L. Jay Tenenbaum
	Ron Kaufman +	Haskell Titchell
	Samuel Ladar +	Sidney Unobskey
	Robert Levison	Anita Weissberg

Ex-Officio: Stewart Foreman
Claude Rosenberg

Intern: Don Abramson

CAMPAIGN CHAIRMAN - LAURENCE E. MYERS

Vice Chairmen - Kenneth J. Colvin
Douglas M. Heller
Donald H. Seiler

ADVANCE DIVISION - CHAIRMAN, WILLIAM J. LOWENBERG

Vice Chairmen - Lloyd W. Dinkelspiel, Jr.
Mrs. Harold S. Dobbs
Mrs. William H. Green
Mervin G. Morris
George B. Saxe

B & P DIVISION - CHAIRMAN, RICHARD ROSENBERG

Vice Chairmen - Fred Kanter
Ron Kaufman
Claude Rosenberg, Jr.
Melvin B. Wasserman

General Section Chairman - Ronald Berman
Physicians Section Chairman - Arnon Fortgang
Accountants Section Chairman - Murry Regensburger

SPECIAL GIFTS DIVISION - CHAIRMAN, ARTHUR ZIMMERMAN

Vice Chairmen - Irwin Bear
George Frankenstein
Donald Kahn

MARIN COUNTY DIVISION - CHAIRMAN, DAVID E. FREEDHEIM

NORTH PENINSULA DIVISION - CHAIRMAN, DR. DONALD NEWMAN

SOUTH PENINSULA DIVISION - CHAIRMAN, MYER SCHER

Vice Chairmen - Mortimer Kaplan
Howard Schor
William Wasserman

TELETHON CHAIRMAN, MAURICE EDELSTEIN

Vice Chairmen - Howard C. Fleishman
Milton Jacobs
Sidney Kluger
Charles Steiner

SPECIAL PROJECTS - CHAIRMAN, LLOYD SANKOWICH

ISRAEL MISSIONS - CHAIRMAN - JEROME I. BRAUN

YOUNG ADULTS DIVISION - CO-CHAIRMAN, JOEL ADLER
DONNA SOLOMON

Directors & Officers

1974 Officers

Jesse Feldman
President
Melvin M. Swig
Chairman, Exec. Comm.
Henry E. Berman
Vice President
Jerome I. Braun
Vice President
Frances D. Green
Vice President
Douglas M. Heller
Treasurer
Peter F. Sloss
Secretary
Lloyd W. Dinkelspiel, Jr.
Assistant Treasurer

Samuel A. Ladar
Herbert A. Leland
Jesse Levin
Lewis B. Levin
Robert M. Levin, Jr.
William J. Lowenberg
Mervin G. Morris
Laurence E. Myers
Irving Rabin
George B. Saxe
Donald H. Seller
Robert E. Sinton
John H. Steinhart
Roselyne C. Swig
Marilyn R. Taubman
Rabbi Jacob Traub
Matthew B. Weinberg
Bernard G. Werth
Marilyn Yolles
Jack Nagen

1974 Board of Directors

Peter Arnstein
Alan E. Becker
John L. Blumlein
Paul Boas
Kenneth Colvin
Phyllis Cook
Harold S. Dobbs
George Frankenstein
Robert B. Friend
Lawrence Goldberg
Richard N. Goldman
Peter E. Haas
Seymour Hyman
Harold J. Kaufman
Ron Kaufman

Robert M. Levinson, Jr.
Social Planning &
Budgeting

1974 Women's Division

Officers

Annette Dobbs
President
Frances Berger
Vice President
Thelma Colvin
Vice President
Fae Asher
Vice President
Sora Lei Newman
Vice President
Phyllis Ginsberg
Vice President
Stephanie Klein
Secretary

1974 Young Adults

Division Officers

Jack Nagan
President
Karen Baker
Vice President
Rita Jacobs
Secretary
Julius Aires
Treasurer

1974 Campaign Officers

Laurence E. Myers
Chairman
Kenneth J. Colvin
Douglas M. Heller

1974 Standing Committee

Chairpersons

Melvin M. Swig
Executive
Douglas M. Heller
Finance & Administrative
Frances D. Green
Fund Raising
Laurence E. Myers
Public Relations

Donald H. Seiler
Vice Chairman
William J. Lowenberg
Advance Division
Chairman
Lloyd W. Dinkelspiel, Jr.
Annette Dobbs
Frances D. Green
Mervin G. Morris
George B. Saxe
Vice Chairpersons
Richard Rosenberg
Business & Professional
Division Chairman
Fred Kanter
Ron Kaufman
Peter F. Sloss
Melvin B. Wasserman
Vice Chairmen
Frances Berger
Thelma Colvin
Women's Division
Co-Chairpersons
David E. Freedheim
Marin Division Chairman
Donald E. Newman, M.D.
North Peninsula
Division Chairman
Meyer Scher
South Peninsula
Division Chairman
Maurice Edelstein
Telephone Chairman
Joel Adler
Donna Solomon
Young Adults Division
Co-Chairpersons

Jerome I. Braun
Israel Leadership
Mission Chairman
Lloyd R. Sankowich
Special Projects
Chairman
Arthur B. Zimmerman
Special Gifts Chairman

Staff

Louis Weintraub
Exec. Vice President
Rabbi Brian L. Luria
Executive Director
Harry Block
IBM Programmer
Wayne L. Feinstein
Administrative Assistant
Diane M. Kayatsky
Public Relations Director
Seymour Kleid
Director, Women's
Division
Marshall H. Kuhn
Director, Pacesetter
Division of Campaign
Bernice Monasch
Office Manager
Charles W. Noble
Comptroller
Michael Papo
Social Planning &
Budget Consultant
Norman L. Rosenblatt
Director, Advance
Division of Campaign

David S. Sacks
Director, Community
Division of Campaign
Nat Starr
Assistant Campaign
Director
Diane L. Waxer
Director, Young
Adults Division
Miriam Weiss
IBM Operations Manager

Constituent Agencies

Bureau of Jewish Education
Hebrew Free Loan Association
Homewood Terrace
Jewish Family Service Agency
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Seiler family

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Mark Roberts, grandson, 10

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Louis Rosenberg, grandfather,
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Alexandra Seiler,
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Eleanor K. Glaser

Raised and educated in the Middle West. During World War II, spent two years in the U.S. Marine Corps Women's Reserve.

Senior year of college was taken in New Zealand, consequently A.B. degree in sociology from University of Michigan was granted in absentia. Study in New Zealand was followed by a year in Sydney, Australia, working for Caltex Oil Company.

Work experience includes such non-profit organizations as Community Service Society, New York City; National Society for Crippled Children and Adults and National Congress of Parents and Teachers in Chicago.

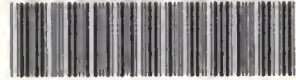
After moving to California in 1966, joined the staff of a local weekly newspaper, did volunteer publicity for the Judah Magnes Museum and the Moraga Historical Society, and was the Bay Area correspondent for a national weekly newspaper. Also served as a history docent for the Oakland Museum.

Additional travel includes Great Britain, Europe, Israel, Mexico, and the Far East.

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